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ABSTRACT

The following papers from a conference dealing with the interaction of adult learning, educational practice, and cultural context are presented: "Radical Adult Education: Back to Basics" (Allman, Wallis); "Teaching To Be Competent" (Armstrong); "Universities and Adult Education: A New Relationship?" (Boud, McDonald); "Theories-in-Use, Reflective Practice and the Teaching of Adults: Professional Culture in Practice" (Bright); "Changing Culture of Medical Education: Teaching What We Know" (Crandall); "And Finally: Changing Cultures of Educational Institutions and Practices" (Duke); "Culture Change/Changing Culture: 'Multi-skilling' the Practitioner in Post-Compulsory Education and Training" (Edwards); "Situating Access to Higher Education in Its Political Culture" (Fieldhouse, Benn); "A Culture of Change? Perspectives on Adult Education in the Workplace" (Hamilton); "Changes in Adult Education Policy and the Impact on 'Client Groups' with Specific Reference to Gender" (Hester, Florence); "The Culture of Difference: Women's Education Re-Examined" (Malcolm); "Adult Learning and Cultural Change in an M.Ed Course: The Case of the Examiners" (Miller, Fletcher); "Adult Education and the Changing Research Context" (Murphy); "Lessons in Citizenship: University Adult Education and Modernity" (Steele); "Employers and the Continuing Education of Employees with Particular Reference to Employee Development Programmes" (Taylor); "New Cultural Contexts for University Adult Education: The Potential of Partnerships with Non-Traditional Agencies" (Thomson); "Nine Facets of Continuing Education for the Professions" (Watson); "Cultures and Double Beings: Linking Adult Learners and Their Environments" (Zeldin); and "Cultural Conflicts: Adult and Further Education Teacher Training in Higher Education" (Zukas). (MN)

SCUTREA

STANDING CONFERENCE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

CHANGING CULTURES & ADULT LEARNING

EDITED BY NOD MILLER AND LINDEN WEST

PAPERS FROM THE 22ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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THE STANDING CONFERENCE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

SCUTREA is a forum for all concerned with research into the education of adults and those involved in the development of adult education as a body of knowledge.

It began as an organisation with a membership consisting solely of university departments of adult education. SCUTREA now draws upon a broader constituency and welcomes individual and institutional members from across the educational field.

Adult education is a growing and fast-changing sector, and at this time SCUTREA provides a focus for the diverse interests of practitioners and researchers. It is a pivotal point in the adult education world in Britain, and is also linked to organisations in both the North and the South, enhancing members' access to international contacts.he SCUTREA annual conference is a major event in the adult education calendar. In addition, smaller workshops, conferences and seminars are organised throughout the year. Members' research and teaching interests are linked through working groups which any member is welcome to join. A termly newsletter, *Scoop*, is published.

The dynamism of SCUTREA is reflected in the publications that have been generated from the working groups and conferences, and the organisation looks forward to an expansive period during this decade.

Membership of SCUTREA is open to individuals and institutions who are accepted by its Council as 'making a contribution to the study of or research into any aspect of learning, education or training in adulthood.'

OFFICERS

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INTRODUCTION

Linden West
University of Kent

THE theme of this year's SCUTREA Conference, changing cultures and adult learning, aims to examine the interaction between adult learning, educational practice and cultural context. By culture is meant both the values, beliefs and activities within groups and whole societies as well as its more traditional sense as a means to enlightenment and sensibility.

Why choose the theme of cultural change? The Planning Group felt a need, which the Conference papers bear out, to take stock during a period of intense upheaval and uncertainty within the field. We wanted to address some fundamental questions about the nature and meaning of current trends and the choices faced by individuals and institutions. Times may be particularly unnerving for those nurtured in the British tradition of adult education conceived as part of a larger process of political and social transformation. It appears that in Britain, America and other first world economies that transformative politics of a traditional kind are on the wane. The skilled working class in Britain, the repository of many twentieth century radical hopes, has been incorporated, however shakily, into a new majority of the culturally content. Many have chosen Thatcherism, individualism and acquisitiveness rather than ethical socialism, communitarianism or the WEA. While there are large numbers outside the walls of the new culture, their fragmentation and disorganisation provides no basis, at least for the present, for a transformative political and cultural movement.

There are of course many adult educators who view the times differently. Their working assumption is that capitalism has resolved some of the old contradictions between human learning and fulfilment, and the world of work. The modern corporation is no longer the enemy of learning and personal development; on the contrary, a well educated workforce is the guarantor of corporate survival, while post-Fordist forms of production give workers more sense of ownership and control in their work – or cultural capital to use the jargon.

A learning society, in this interpretation, is being born of economic necessity and should be welcomed because of the recognition given to lifelong learning, at least until retirement. The enlightened employers insist that workers must be effective learners to adapt to changing technologies and function effectively as part of a team. Human resource development has become the gospel of the new order and this may include encouragement and financial support to attend a non-vocational class. Those, like Galbraith, who worry about the power and manipulation of corporate culture, both of the individuals who work within it and those who are persuaded to consume its products, can find solace in the creation of a more confident, assured, skilful, literate workforce. While there may be basic ecological and ethical questions about the role of the corporations and the compliance of corporate 'man' (sic) (the planet is being irrevocably despoiled, the South exploited, corporate loyalty placed above all else) and while there is a whole underclass excluded from the good life and learning society within the first world, nonetheless, for the majority, the need to learn in adulthood and at work is an idea whose time has come.

Changing cultures and politics are intruding into adult education in more immediate ways. The tripartite alliance of providing bodies – university departments of adult education, the WEA and the LEAs – is giving way under the impact of changed funding and legislation to new players and agendas from further education and the new universities. The old beliefs of education for social purpose and a more enlightened democracy are either ignored or dismissed by Government and its agents. The new culture is that of vocationalism, meritocracy and enterprise designed to equip the workforce for the competitive struggle.

The new values seem quite different from those of the traditional adult movement. The rhetoric of CATS, vocationalism, learning outcomes and customers fits uncomfortably with the spirit of critical, open-ended enquiry and fellowship through learning. Perhaps the discontinuity and difference are exaggerated, as Chris Duke argues in his Conference paper; perhaps the liberal spirit survives and prospers in the college classroom, despite the language of NVQs. Moreover initiatives such as CATS will mean a more open system and greater choice for adult learners. But such changes are at the least ambiguous. Access could mean wider opportunity for the brightest and best only while the rest are ignored. Competency-based learning might produce better technicians but neglect the education of the whole person.

These issues, and more, are and will be addressed in the Conference papers and workshops. The agenda encompasses changing times at every level, from the impact of the dominant political culture on institutional behaviour to the likely effect of the competency approach on individual courses, classrooms and tutors. The roots of older traditions of social purpose and an educated citizenry are revisited for clues as to future action while learning in the workplace, its possibilities and constraints, is evaluated.

The impact of new providers and philosophies on the structure of training for adult educators is similarly scrutinised. Indeed the question is raised as to whether there is a future for a discrete adult education training at all as the education of adults becomes part of mainstream higher and further education. And papers on gender and the future for women's education remind some of us again of the struggles of those whose story has been silenced or ignored in older as well as more recent educational cultures.

There are some major omissions from the Conference agenda. Foremost, race and ethnicity, reflecting no doubt the regrettable absence of the minorities in SCUTREA's membership and adult education more widely. Second, the growing search for redefinition and greater wholeness on the part of some men. It would have been good to have considered the topic alongside women's education and how educators can best respond to the growing struggle to redefine male cultural norms.

The Conference workshops have been grouped into five strands which will meet concurrently. The first focuses on cultural change and institutional practice towards adult learners, both historically and contemporaneously. Alistair Thomson explores the opportunities for new alliances between university adult education and emerging groups while Tom Steele examines the cultural ambiguities – colonialist and incorporationist, modernist and politically progressive – of British university adult education in a search for new directions. There is an optimistic account of changes in adult education in Australia as well as a paper on the culture of 'radical' enterprise underlying the current expansion of higher education. Chris Duke seeks to unravel a web of cultural, political and educational complexities enveloping institutions and individuals and concludes on a characteristically enterprising and optimistic note by illustrating how the necessary struggle for survival and its concomitant compromise can be combined with progressive values and purpose.

The second strand relates to learning in the workplace and the changing attitudes of some employers to adult education. John Taylor examines Ford EDAP and similar schemes and the motivation of employers in these initiatives while a workshop, chaired by Mary Hamilton, will examine the actual experiences of employers and employees in work-based basic education. There are sessions on profiling and portfolios and what learner-managed learning in industry means in practice, as well as reflections on the impact of change in continuing medical education and professional development more generally. The third strand looks specifically at the impact of new providers and competency-based methods on the training of adult educators, and the fourth element concerns gender and women's education and includes a paper by Janice Malcolm which advocates a radical reappraisal of women-only provision outside mainstream education.

A fifth miscellaneous category includes papers on the need to understand the inner self and outer lives alongside intellectual forms of knowing if individuals and communities are to progress. There is a paper on adult learning in rural communities and last (but by no means least) reflections by Paula Allman and John Wallis on the nature of radical education and how Gramsci can help in constructing new alliances and agendas.

The papers are a blend of optimism and pessimism, some colleagues seeing the present cultural shifts as an opportunity and others as a threat; most often a mixture of both. In general the writing is stronger on cultural analysis than prescribing what should be done. But that, as a WEA student, Jim Salter, recently reminded me, is a stage to be gone through. He wrote[1] that '*education is an affirmation of the belief that people are not the playthings of forces they do not control but in order*

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[1] Jim Salter, *What the WEA means to me*, the winning essay in a WEA South East District competition.

to control them they have to understand what they are, not only in the society they are part of but also in their own psyche.' That puts the issue rather well. I hope the Conference at Kent, and these proceedings, will assist in understanding what is positive, valuable and potentially liberating in current times, and within ourselves, and how best, pedagogically and organisationally, to nurture and sustain it.

Finally, a word of thanks to the Conference Planning Group (Nod Miller, Miriam Zukas, Richard Edwards, Cathy Hull and David Jones) for their ideas, support and encouragement and to Val Swash for her efficient administration without which confusion would have reigned.

LINDEN WEST, Organiser

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RADICAL ADULT EDUCATION: BACK TO BASICS

Paula Allman
John Wallis
University of Nottingham

THIS paper is written to raise questions around the possible future of established assumptions that have informed radical education practice for a number of years. In a period often depicted as 'new times', typified by a new world order, shrunk by new information technology and operating in multi-polar power relations, it is easy to dismiss earlier principles as the grand narratives that had been at best misguided and at worst part of the oppressive order which silenced so many. We are now free to celebrate difference, to privilege 'liberatory' discourses and to acknowledge the multiple values of our culturally kaleidoscopic society. We live in a 'post' world of conditionality and transcience, and the new millenium will usher in a new politics of shifting coalitions as post-socialism is acknowledged (Marquand, Guardian, 23 May 1992). To hark back to earlier beliefs, or even to try to seek out consistent principles, could be presented as futile and irrelevant, or at least — to quote SCUTREA publicity — old hat. However, in a period of flux we want to reflect on the consistency of approach within the work of three radicals and, by implication, ask yet again what human outcomes are the conscious or unconscious aims of cultural struggle.

The concept and practice of radical adult education has many historical and contemporary variants. Unfortunately, the variants are often so disparate as to render the term powerless, perhaps even useless, as a tool of analysis or guide to action. To our way of thinking, there is but one principle that must inform the intent, practice and effect of radical education, although other principles logically follow from it. Radical education must be about social transformation, both preparing people to be capable and desirous of engaging in social transformation and in engaging in it when the mass of humanity takes on the responsibility for creating their own, collective destiny. However, to reinfuse radical education with this principle, with this meaning, radical educators will need to go 'Back to Basics.'

A good starting place would be two philosophical concepts that are implicit in every form of educational practice and theory, *viz*. epistemology and ontology. Educational deconstructionists have devoted little energy to unpacking the epistemologies and ontologies that underpin the various forms of education. Yet to us these seem the very basics, the core, even when they are not acknowledged, were never known or have been long forgotten, that are constitutive of educational practices, i.e. relations.

Since non-radical educators, by our definition, are not intent on social transformation there is nothing terribly contradictory in their lack of awareness or acknowledgement of epistemology and ontology, but clarity regarding these concepts is indispensable to the radical educator, or political activist for that matter. Every radical must have a carefully formulated and articulated theory of the 'origin and ground of knowledge' (epistemology) and, as a consequence, a stance on an appropriate radical relation to knowledge as well as an equally rigorous theory of what it means, and could mean, to be a human being (an ontology). For the radical, the latter must entail a theory of both "being" and "becoming". Radical education, as we've defined it, or rather its practitioners/theorists, would surely acknowledge that Marx, Gramsci and Freire have had an influence on their thinking about radical education. However, because the educational and political significance of epistemology and ontology have, more often than not, been ignored, or at best partially formulated, the ideas of these radical "3-Rs" are often used to separate and dogmatically to distinguish, rather than unite, one form of radical praxis from another. As Gramsci would say, we need an all-embracing approach if we are to realise a radical transformation of our social formation. To create a radical philosophical movement so well-embraced and grounded that it becomes the passion, the will for social transformation, there is no better place to start than Marx. However, we also need Gramsci and Freire to understand how to infuse politics with education and education with radical politics as well as to create an inter-relation between these two arenas of human praxis. We also need them as examples of how to re-locate Marx's analysis and ideas, as they did, within an historically specific social and cultural conjuncture so that we can do the same for our own. When Gramsci and Freire undertook this task they did not leave Marx behind ... they relocated the original ideas within the movement of history, a movement constituted of human praxis. But of course they could not have done this without referring back to the basics of Marx in the first place. As educators two of their chief concerns were epistemology and ontology. With reference to these two concepts Gramsci and Freire hold firmly to Marx's original ideas, although they, as we must, worked them into their own specific contexts. It is the unity of their thought in respect of these concepts that we want to explore because that unity could re-infuse radical education with the meaning inherent within the principle with which we began this discussion, viz. social transformation.

Ontology

For Marx there was no fixed or pre-given essence of human nature. We are what we are; our being is a result of the ensemble of social relations in which we are born and daily engage. Furthermore, this 'social being' is the foundation of our consciousness (feelings and thoughts about our world and our lived experience within it). And since human existence depends, in the first instance, on reproducing the material conditions of our sustenance or survival, the way in which people were related socially to produce the material world was the most fundamental social relation of all. It also gave shape to the character of many others. However, under capitalism, and most other hitherto existing forms of social organisation, this social relation had been an antagonistic one which involved the subordination and alienation of one social group or class to the seeming benefit of another. This in short was his analysis of "being" thus far in history.

"Becoming" cannot be escaped as human heings are historical beings — beings of movement and change. But "becoming" can either be about becoming more fully human, humanising the world; or it can involve becoming more dehumanised and alienated such that we have little concern about destroying ourselves and all the manifest glories of the natural world with which our humanity is interdependent. To realise the first of these alternatives, human beings had to become critically conscious of their historically derived present conditions. They had to understand that the social relations in which they were currently enmeshed were the creations of human beings; therefore not natural or inevitable. With that understanding and an understanding of how these relations limit us as human beings, and limit the survival of the planet, it must surely follow that given a collective will and effort, human beings can create new social relations in which "becoming" will be possible in a humanising direction. It also follows that once we critically understand what needs to be changed, the task of "becoming more" involves the active collective engagement in transforming or abolishing all social relations which block or limit the project for humanisation.

We invite readers (participants) to challenge us, please, if they have found a different ontology in Gramsci or Freire.

Epistemology

One of the greatest obstacles to the critical intervention of people in collectively creating and shaping a more humane destiny is our relation to knowledge. Surely how one relates to either extant, academic knowledge or the knowledge of everyday existence, is based on the theory or ideas one holds of the origin of knowledge.

There is a theory in Marx's writing that underpins, like his more-widely acknowledged theory of ontology, all of his other theoretical contributions. This is his theory of consciousness, or praxis (the terms on his theory are synonymous). Active, 'sensuous' social being creates the material fabric of our hearts and minds. Therefore to the degree that the social relations of our existence are limited or limiting, so too will be our consciousness, whether it be that of the academic exposé or common sense — to say nothing of our subjectivities. But through collective support and struggle, we could hold these relations and the knowledge they produce at arm's length; we could critically scrutinize them and move forward to create new knowledge that would prepare us to engage in social transformation. But then already existing knowledge, in any form, becomes the beginning point of learning/education, not the only end; and this involves a very new and more fully human relation to knowledge. Marx offers a brilliant analysis, which space prevents us from discussing here, of how capitalist relations encourage patterns in bourgeois consciousness, patterns like dichotomising, abstraction, reification (all inter-related) which continue to plague contemporary thought and which are a rich source for learners involved in radical critique/creative construction.

Again, Gramsci and Freire never waver from Marx's theory of consciousness. However, they embellish it in ways particular to their own historically specific experience of capitalism and their praxis within these contexts. Whereas, for the most part, (and these are important exceptions) Marx focused his critique on bourgeois political and economic thought, Freire and Gramsci have aided our understanding of popular consciousness and "common sense". These elaborations are particularly rich in insights regarding how individuals and social groups can be constituted within a myriad of co-existing and contradictory social relations. Therefore their 'ensemble' of social relations may include some pertaining to this stage of capitalism, some to previous stages when once these relations were the core but now persist as residuals, or even the malingering remnants of feudalistic social relations.

Freire, as we would expect of the professional educationalist amongst the three, offers the fullest elaboration of what this should mean for the radical in terms of starting with people's current reading of the world and enabling them to change their relationship to knowledge. Without the same elaboration Gramsci suggests a very similar approach, but neither could have come to these proposals without going back to basics, going back to Marx. And we won't do justice to their ideas and our objectives until we do the same.

TEACHING TO BE COMPETENT: A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE CRITIQUE OF A COMPETENCE-BASED APPROACH TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Paul Armstrong
Haringey Education Service

Taking another look at an old hat

A changing culture may no longer be an appropriate description of the competence-based approach to teaching and learning as we enter a fourth consecutive period of Conservative government in Britain. Less New Age, and more old hat. Three years ago, I presented a paper at SCUTREA on contradictions in the government's Youth Training Schemes, which contained a critique of competence-based learning[1]. As I pointed out then, competence-based training had been around for a decade or more in North America, and had been subject to a fairly detailed critique[2]. So why re-examine the critique at this stage?

In March of this year, the Training and Development Lead Body (TDLB) launched the national standards it has set for training. This is the culmination of several years' work and significant resources. Whilst the outcome of this lead body is likely to have direct relevance to adult educators, to put it in perspective the TDLB is one of over 150 lead bodies covering most occupational areas from accountancy to the wool industry, mostly sponsored through the Employment Department to set standards that fit with the National Council for Vocational Council (NCVQ)'s proposals for national standards in vocational training. The setting of competence-based standards and the development of a national framework for vocational training have been a consistent concern of post-1979 governments in spite of major organisational, practical, economic and political difficulties. Even today there are those sceptics who remain confident that the insistence on competence-based training and the possibilities of a national framework for vocational training will disappear.

This paper will try to re-examine the progress and critique of competence-based training, using the TDLB's standards for illustrative purposes, and consider the implications of these standards in training and for training for adult education in Britain. To do this, I shall attempt to address a number of key questions:

- What is a lead body?
- How are standards set?
- Do standards mean the assurance of the quality of training?
- Who assesses the standards of competence achieved?
- What are the implications of this for, say, education and training providers and curriculum development?

Where necessary, I provide some description of the system, but do not attempt to repeat the definitions and concepts as outlined, for example, in UDACE's Understanding Competence and Understanding Learning Outcomes.3

What is a lead body?

If the standards established by industry lead bodies for competence-based training are to be the foundation of all future training programmes, this places those lead bodies at the front end of curriculum development. So, it is important to know who has been involved in setting and approving training standards. There is possibly a prior but very critical question that needs to be asked. How has the occupational world been divided in the first place into discrete areas for which lead bodies can be established?

The answer to this question is almost certainly to be found in the complex web of bureaucracy in the Employment Department in Moorfoot, Sheffield — what was formerly the Manpower Services Commission, the Training Commission (briefly) and then the Training Agency. The significant branches are to be found within the Training, Enterprise and Education Directorate (TEED) — namely, Qualifications and Standards and Standards and Methodology. These are two of the 23 branches of TEED. The first of these has five sections which cover liaison with NCVQ, European standards, and the development of standards in a range of all but two occupational areas. The second branch has three sections which cover the development of occupational standards and the development of methodology, giving technical advice on standards development and vocational qualifications, as well as the development of standards in the other two broad occupational areas — management and the care sector.

From my experience of working on a project for the Employment Department with the Care Sector Consortium[4], I suspect this 'occupational mapping' has been a fairly ad hoc process, lacking any kind of systematic or rigorous approach. To a certain extent, it has been a question of trial and error. For example, the Care Sector Consortium — the lead body for the care sector, whose existence was engineered by the Standards and Methodology Branch of TEED — identified community work as a possible area within its occupational domain. However, because of its historical origins, its differential position in England and Scotland, its degree of professionalisation, this occupational area has caused the lead body major difficulties in progressing the development of standards for community work training. Had there existed an Education Lead Body at the outset, this occupational area might more readily have fallen within its domain. But the Education Lead Body has been a more recent establishment. The need for this body was not originally anticipated as it was envisaged that the TDLB would cover the whole domain of education and training. As it turned out, that was not the case, and so a lead body for education was established.

The civil servants employed in the Employment Department, particularly in the Standards and Methodology Branch, have had a significant role to play in both determining the terrain of the occupational map, and those significant organisations and individuals who would play a key role in industry lead bodies. A lead body is essentially a forum in which employers get together to set standards. Sometimes, employers call on the support and expertise of trade unions, professional bodies, and training providers. They have also had to work with accrediting bodies such as City and Guilds, BTEC and the Royal Society of Arts if they wish to have the assessment of their standards accredited in terms of a national qualification, and NCVQ if that accreditation is to be a national vocational qualification (NVQ).

How are standards set?

The Employment Department through the Standards and Methodology branch of TEED has attempted to try to control the procedures by which lead bodies set about the task of developing standards. A series of guidance notes have been issued to advise lead bodies on methodology[5]. In practice, a relatively small number of consultancies have been assisting lead bodies in the process, utilising the received orthodoxy in terms of methodology — functional analysis. This is a method of analysing work or occupational functions that begins a top-down process of identifying the key purpose and key roles, and then progressively breaking these down into smaller units of competence — units and elements of competence. Each element of competence can be further refined into a series of identifiable, measurable and assessable performance criteria. The analysis will also review the range of settings, activities and work arrangements in which these functions occur.

The standards methodology, using functional analysis and combined with various verification procedures, including a range of task analyses undertaken by those who actually do the job, has undoubtedly become more sophisticated and rigorous, to the point where the importance of the methodological concerns of reliability and validity, as well as the equal opportunities dimensions of the process, have been recognised. Participation and representation in the process are now key issues, and special efforts are increasingly made to ensure that the widest range of views are taken into the analysis.

The outcome have been increasingly sophisticated but detailed set of training standards in a wide range of occupational areas. So detailed that they become extremely bulky to the point of being unmanageable. For example, the TDLB's final product consists of five broad 'areas' of training and development:

A Identify training and development needs
B Design training and development strategies and plans
C Provide learning opportunities, resources and support
D Evaluate the effectiveness of training and development
E Support training and development advances and practice.

The first of these has five identified units of competence, giving a subtotal of 18 elements of competence, and 126 performance criteria. Over the whole set of standards there are a total of 44 units of competence, 94 elements of competence and 814 performance criteria. We need also to bear in mind that these standards are intended to cover the equivalent of NCVQ Levels 3 and 4[5].

Work is being carried out on extending training and development standards to the professional level, which will almost certainly increase the number of units, elements and performance criteria available.

However, given the comprehensiveness of the package available already, this extension is more likely to occur by drawing on standards set by other lead bodies. The TDLB standards already incorporate some middle management competences derived by the Management Charter Initiative (MCI) in its Level 4 qualifications. A number of lead bodies, including the TDLB and MCI are cross-sectoral, being relevant to all industry sectors, as well as being a specific industry in its own right.

Do standards ensure quality training?

The short answer is no. In fact, because they are based on assessment of competence, there are few implications for how learning is delivered. NCVQ have always been anxious not to prescribe specific modes of learning or particular training programmes. At most, all these standards can do is to provide training providers with a very detailed checklist of the range of competences and underpinning knowledge that 'clients' will need to demonstrate in order to be awarded a national vocational qualification. Thus, the key to quality is how these standards are implemented, not the standards themselves.

However, much is made about the perceived enhancement and assurance of quality through national training standards. For example, the TDLB says that

> Clearly specified standards backed by competence based assessment systems enable employers to extend their quality initiatives to the development and performance of the workforce.[6]

This has to be recognised for what it is — a matter of faith being presented as fact of one of a series of supposed benefits of national standards for employers and employees.

Quality will depend on training providers and assessors of competence, both in the workplace and in off-the-job training, and those verifiers whose task is to ensure the quality of assessment.

Who assesses the standards of competence achieved?

Unless lead bodies are also awarding and accrediting bodies, this falls outside their responsibility. It is also outside the responsibility of the Employment Department. Implementation of national standards rests largely with training providers, assessment centres, awarding and accrediting bodies and, finally, NCVQ which will kitemark approved qualifications at an appropriate level. The lead body will have a key role to play in establishing proposed qualification structures — constellations of units and elements of competence. These constellations can be matched with existing qualifications; accreditation bodies may wish to bring their qualifications in line with the proposed constellations. In the case of training and development, a number of organisations offer National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs): BTEC, City and Guilds, Pitmans, RSA, Institute of Training and Development and SCOTVEC. Whilst the lead body can specify the number and range of units for assessment, and give advice on how evidence may be collected, whether in the workplace or through simulation, projects, assignments or questioning techniques, the actual assessment is left to specialist centres and verified by the awarding and accrediting bodies.

An institution of further or higher education might have seen itself as a training provider or organisation. Increasingly, they will need to adapt to the role of an assessment centre. Assessment centres will be a broader range of organisations than conventional training providers. Employers, for example, can set themselves up as assessment centres, both for their own employees and for those of other firms within their occupational area. Specialist consultancies are already emerging for undertaking these activities. Staff will need to be competent in assessment and verification rather than pedagogic skills. Indeed, particular constellation of the TDLB's national standards are prescribed as required competences for assessors and verifiers. Who assesses the assessors? Who verifies the verifiers?

What are the implications of this?

For colleges and training providers the implications are apparent — a changing culture, a changing role. The question of designing and customising training programmes to meet individual needs, to respond to the needs of local and national employers is still relevant to their activity. However, it is clear that whilst they need to demonstrate competence in teaching and assessment, teaching to be competent is no longer their prime role. The onus is on the 'clients' to learn to be competent; staff become managers of learning, providers of support and guidance, or assessors of competence. Having taken individuals through the assessment of their prior learning, there may be very little left for a training provider to deliver, apart from recording the assessment and putting the accreditation procedures into operation. This changing role is not only happening in post-compulsory vocational training; it is evident with teachers in primary and secondary schools under the national curriculum, and supported by technical and vocational initiatives in schools.

The implications for the educator of adults, where there is no demand for assessment of learning outcomes, whether they are prior, current or future learning or experience, may be minimal. They may, however, need to have an NVQ or SVQ in training and development to demonstrate their competence in teaching, designing, evaluating and managing programmes. Those involved in delivering teacher training programmes will almost certainly need to engage with the national vocational qualification framework and associated assessment of competence and learning outcomes. Those involved in access to higher education programmes will also need to engage with the idea of teaching students to be competent in learning.

The main changes in role are to do with pedagogic skills and curriculum development. By breaking down training so finely, the TDLB make those skills either more apparent or more obscure, depending on one's perspective. Presumably, what teachers and trainers traditionally do are contained within Area C of the national standards — provide learning opportunities, resources and support. Teaching becomes obtaining and allocating resources, preparing and presenting demonstrations, supporting achievement of learning objectives, assisting and supporting the application of learning, co-ordinating the delivery of learning opportunities, originating training support materials, and much preparation and provision of learning opportunities. Is this merely a precise breakdown of what teachers actually do, or is there something missing? I suspect there are at least two dimensions neglected by this competence framework. These are to do with personal effectiveness and knowledge.

Effectiveness is a set of characteristics that might be termed 'personal competence'. The TDLB have had virtually nothing to do with this side of training. There is very little in national standards about personal qualities or effectiveness. These are presumably generic competences, but they do — I would argue — relate to effectiveness in performance of role. Interestingly, the MCI standards on management competence have attempted to deal with personal competence, but not as mainstream management competencies. They cover such things as showing concern for excellence, showing sensitivity to the needs of others, relating to others, presenting oneself positively to others, showing self confidence, managing personal emotions and stress, taking decisions, identifying and applying concepts. To these we can add a series of elements concerning equal opportunities, such as promoting anti-discriminatory practice, supporting individual rights and choices, acknowledging individual's personal beliefs and identity. These would be incorporated in the assessment process through a personal development plan. How evidence is to be collected on what are in effect, attitudes and behaviours is not at all clear, and according to the evaluation carried out, was not included in the field trials of the national standards[7].

Knowledge has consistently posed a problem for those involved in assessing competence. There is an argument to suggest that what is being tested is knowledge in use as demonstrated in competent behaviours. Of course, some routinised behaviours may lack any kind of knowledge base at all. There has been considerable discussion of the role of underpinning knowledge in standards setting, and is worthy of a critical review in its own right. According to Alison Wolf and Lindsay Mitchell[8], individuals will not be able to meet the standards for competent performance unless they have acquired the relevant underpinning knowledge. Knowledge and understanding underpin and are integral to, competent performance:

> If standards are well and fully specified, they should assist the clarification of the knowledge and understanding implied by a unit or element of competence, both for learning and assessment purposes. However, this is not always as easy as may first appear as one cannot 'see' knowledge and understanding.
>
> Also, a particular piece of competent behaviour will generally involve selecting the correct knowledge from a wider knowledge base, and applying it appropriately.

Given that knowledge and understanding are necessary for performance, and — indeed — often learned and acquired through it — then demonstration of competent performance in the workplace must — by definition — also demonstrate underpinning knowledge and understanding — 'no other assessment or evidence will be relevant or necessary'. In other words, the emphasis is always on the application of knowledge and understanding to the occupational context. In terms of curriculum development, Area E relates to supporting development advances and practice. A series of elements encompass making contributions to advances to training and development theory and practice (separately), as well as technology, and providing information to enable others to contribute to advances (is this research?), and through evaluation. However, the lack of reflection on theory in use is evident. This should not surprise us.

The critique in practice

Michael Collins argues that competency-based systems are not conducive to acts of reflection, which from the perspective of his phenomenological critique are vital for grasping the meaning of everyday projects and their constituting events. His anti-behaviourist stance is shared by many critics (not all phenomenologists) of the competence-based approach. That critique, already outlined and supported in my previous paper to SCUTREA still stands, but theoretical or academic critique is of limited influence on policy-makers and civil servants. More telling will be the critique based on practice — it just doesn't work, or it is too expensive to operate.

The fear of this critique is contained within publications that present national standards. Almost without exception, they are marketing devices, selling the idea of competence-based training. The TDLB, for example, talks in terms of 'responding to the challenge', emphasising that the standards are national, strategic, comprehensive, examples of 'good practice', and indicators of quality. Here is a sample of how to sell standards:

> The Standards go beyond current expectations. They take future needs into account, and they apply across all contexts. This gives them a strategic focus ... The Standards ... define the strategic requirements for occupational competence. Job specifications and job descriptions define the tactical deployment of competence within specific sectors or training systems or organisations. The Standards become useful when deciding the training and development outcomes associated with a job. In turn this can help to clarify the tasks and skills needed to achieve these outcomes. And, of course, by starting with the purpose of the job ... it will quickly become apparent whether the job is a training job, or another job with some training component in it.[9]

It should also be clear that what is being sold is not just an approach, but a culture — the enterprise culture; and there is a whole government-based bureaucracy built on that culture that needs to be sustained, including TEED and the NCVQ.

So who are they selling it to? Primarily, the groups that need to be sold the idea are awarding and accrediting bodies, training providers and organisations, employers and employees. It would appear that most awarding and accrediting bodies are now committed to the approach, though there is still an uneasy relationship between traditional awarding bodies and NCVQ. Training providers are forced into compliance with the system to ensure their survival in an increasingly competitive market. However, the evidence suggests that such organisations need to undertake a cultural change within their organisations, to ensure that their staff are appropriate to the requirements of a competence-based approach to teaching and learning. Not only does the approach change the nature of roles and responsibilities, but it would appear that the tasks of assessment are becoming routine, monotonous bureaucratic form-filling that requires fairly low level skills, though it can be made more exciting in its practical application and by linking it in with quality assurance issues.

The Achilles heel, however, is undoubtedly employers, and employees. The idea that lead bodies are employer organisations based on occupational groups may be sound in theory, but in practice these organisations do not always represent the whole of the industry. Pump-priming the commitment of large companies with training plans already in existence is one thing; persuading the small employer to commit resources to the assessment of the competence of the individuals is another. Training is not universally perceived as an investment by employers or — indeed — employees. Assessment to national standards is rarely seen as a priority by employers. This is partly subcultural, and may possibly be addressed through offering rewards or imposing penalties to coerce employers to respond. The Employment Department is operating the Investors in People programme of awards in recognition of commitment of companies to training, and this requires those candidates for the award to align themselves to the national framework and competence-based approaches. But the resources for this are limited, and will only attract a very small percentage of businesses. In part, the reaction is rational — it is hard to demonstrate the economic sense of training to those businesses who lose the staff they have trained to competitors. In part, the response is traditional — employers and their organisations tend to be fairly conservative. Time-serving rather than competence-based training prevails. Without their willingness to participate in this national vocational framework, there is doubt that the assessment of competence can be sustained into the next century.

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3. UDACE, *Understanding Competence: A Development Paper* (NIACE, November 1989); *Understanding Learning Outcomes: A Development Paper* (NIACE, November 1989).

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5. NCVQ will assign each qualification to a level within its framework. Initially this was a four level framework, but is in the process of being extended to encompass professional and postgraduate qualifications. Levels are sup[posed to indicate different attainment of vocational competence, and may indicate breadth and range of competences attained, complexity and difficulty of competences, degree of skills, ability to undertake specialist activities, to organise and plan work, to transfer competences from one context to another, to innovate, and to supervise and train others. Level 1 is the basic level, Level 2 is the standard, Level 3 is advanced, Level 4 is higher and Level 5 is professional, which would involve application of a significant range of principles and complex techniques with substantial personal autonomy and responsibility, particularly for others. Applied to training and development, Level 3 is defined by the TDLB as deliver training specified and designed by others, assess the outcomes of that training and, from identified learning needs, design training which facilitates learning and meets objectives at operational level. Level 4 is design, deliver, manage and evaluate training and development programmes and learning experiences to meet individual and organisational objectives. (TDLB, *National Standards for Training and Development: Qualifications Structure*, March 1992; p.2).

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UNIVERSITIES AND ADULT EDUCATION: A NEW RELATIONSHIP?

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THE CONTEXT

Changes in the education of adults

THE present decade is seeing unprecedented changes in the ways in which adult learning is being viewed. The role of training and retraining is being fundamentally rethought, learning in the workplace is assuming greater importance, recognition of learning gained outside formal courses is being legitimated, literacy is regarded as the *sine qua non* of economic development, the aging population is creating new demands and forms of adult education and government policy is giving more attention to adult learning than at any other time in history.

In Australia, a Senate Committee has pushed for the recognition of adult and community education as a new "fourth" sector of education apart from schools, technical and further education and universities; there is a major national push for workplace reform based, among other things, on the opening of new job paths through training; and a new law requires all but the smallest employer to expend 1.5% of their payroll on structured training. Equivalent changes can also be seen in the United Kingdom and many other countries.

One of the significant features of all these changes is the shift of discussion from the notion of "adult education" to "adult learning" and the reinterpreting of adult education into a more inclusive form. The distinctions which were once made between general education and specialist training, the liberal and the professional, learning for life and learning for work, the vocational and non-vocational, the movement of adult education and the practice of adult learning are much less clearly drawn and perhaps less meaningful than they once were. When so little was provided for adults and when that which was provided was the monopoly of the privileged classes, it was essential to protect the non-instrumental. Now the battleground has shifted and it is necessary to ensure that the new disadvantaged are not neglected to protect provision for those earlier beneficiaries of the movement who are now more able to look after themselves.

The professionalisation of adult education

As the adult learning business has grown there has been a *de facto* professionalisation of staff which has been unplanned and unheralded. The debate about the inappropriateness of professionalising traditional forms of adult education has been totally ignored in practice as practitioners have acquired the skills they need wherever and from whomever they needed them, in the process gaining qualifications (in teacher education, management, technical areas and general degrees) of varying apparent appropriateness. Indeed, in some cases, specific adult teaching qualifications are required for entry into some forms of employment.

What we are currently seeing are legitimate needs for professional development becoming acknowledged. It is important for professional development opportunities to be available for those staff, or employers, who need it. And if they are available they should be of a good standard and in a form which can be recognised if the practitioner changes employer or moves to another location.

The role of universities

What have the universities been doing while these major social and economic changes have been taking place? The simple answer is that, for the most part, these developments have passed them by. The traditional university adult education department in Australia was confined to the older universities. It took a pride in offering extramural education in non-award courses with staff who were subject specialists. It contributed little to the training of other adult educators or to research in adult education and it became progressively isolated within their own institutions. By the mid-1980s these departments had disappeared and their staff retired or dispersed.

In their place were created centres for continuing education run by professional administrators rather than academics. These focus on marketing the expertise of professional schools through short courses with high fees. Their mission is to at least cover costs, including the costs of all their staff, and desirably return a surplus to the university. In parallel to these developments, other departments in the university were opening access to adult students in large numbers. These students were particularly successful compared with school leavers and they have become a permanent feature of the undergraduate profile.

Luckily, the picture was not as gloomy as this sketch suggests. Other developments were afoot. In the UK some adult education departments were struggling to reinvent themselves while maintaining the important traditional values, but in Australia, with the exception of one older provincial university, there has been a discontinuity. While adult education was being privatised in the older universities, a new form was growing on the other side of the binary divide.

The teachers college tradition from which many of these non-university institutions grew involved a commitment to learners, to teaching and to award-granting courses. They had no investment in the extra-mural role of university adult education departments which had so conspicuously failed. As they grew into universities themselves , they started to rethink their role taking as models whatever seemed most appropriate. In our view the three main roles which universities should have now in adult education are: support for the professional development of adult educators at all levels; research, development and consultancy on all aspects of adult education and training; and direct provision of education for mature students, mostly in access and continuing professional education programs. Emphasis in adult education departments should be placed on the first two of these, as many higher education institutions have found adequate ways of dealing with the latter. In the remainder of this paper we illustrate what might be done by reference to developments in our own institution, the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS).

THE ISSUES

Professional development of adult educators

The education of the teachers or trainers of adults is certainly not a unitary field. Different kinds of professionalism, or at least different emphases, are needed in different adult education contexts. It is curious that some aspects of the tradition inherited by adult educators are at odds with those of all other parts of education. In-service education and professional development for school educators is such a normal part of their work that the need is never questionned; this view has come late to adult educators. The adult education contexts pose dilemmas for a university enrolling adult educators in formal professional development courses. Some courses will lead to initial, post-experience qualifications! We have addressed some of these dilemmas by designing courses which develop skills of reflective practice and actively use the concurrent experience of learners as part of the course of study. Typically, negotiated learning contracts are used to focus activities which meet both the needs of the specific learners and the academic requirements of the course.

A consequence of the range of adult education contexts is the need for a range of courses. In our case they include Associate Diplomas, a Bachelor's degree, Graduate Diplomas, Master's degrees and PhD. They variously focus on practitioners in one or more of the main areas: community adult education, Aboriginal education, training and human resource development, TESOL and adult basic education. In addition to these courses, which are offered within government-funded places, there is a new trend emerging of employer-sponsored courses. This is a clear sign that we are developing close relationships with the field of practice. These sponsored courses are versions of the courses already mentioned, but tailored for particular groups and paid for by the employers of these groups.

The advantage of having such a wide array of courses and over 900 students in the School of Adult and Language Education, is that there are sufficient staff to maintain close links with the diversity of practice in the field, to allow cross-fertilisation through teaching across courses and to provide a critical mass for their own professional development.

Our experience leads us firmly to the view that professional development must be concurrent with practice, but that it must also be sufficiently wide-ranging to extend practitioners beyond their own immediate area of practice. There would be very little cross-links among the parts of the profession without the presence of the university as an active player. A great deal of idden support is provided for many other forms of professional development outside formal courses.

Research

Probably the single most important role in adult education for the post-binary universities is research and development. Quite simply, as Alan Tuckett of NIACE has expressed it to us, if we (the universities) do not do it then no one else will. This includes the whole area of research beyond the immediate local setting, investigation of various issues that are generated from practice or policy, documentation and dissemination of information about good practice, support for self-critical inquiry and a base from which practitioners from the diversity of contexts engage in developments across settings. The emphasis on extensive collaboration with practitioners as distinct to more arms length involvement will vary according to the disposition of the department. There is a considerable contrast between this and the more traditional role in which there was little research and development directly connected with the field of practice, staff saw themselves as discipline-centred rather than practice-centred and development was often driven more by the interests of external bodies than from the universities themselves.

One of the great strengths of the higher education sector is the ability to combine professional development with other kinds of activity. In our case, three Departments within the School have been created to provide a primary focus for teaching, scholarship and long term research within the main fields of practice. In addition there are groupings to facilitate service and consultancy and focused research and development across Departments and Schools. In the area of research and development, we have identified a need for there to be separately constituted research centres in two areas which are of current and emerging significance in Australia. The Language and Literacy Centre is mentioned below, the other is newly established in Vocational Learning.

Consultancy

Different mechanisms have been established for those activities which are predominantly service and consultancy, those which are primarily research and development, and those which are teaching and scholarly, although there is continual need to ensure that the boundaries between these are activities facilitate good work rather than inhibiting it.

The three development and consultancy services which have been created in our Faculty illustrate the different needs of the field.

- Training and Development Services (TDS) is unashamedly commercially driven and market oriented. It offers short courses and consultancy services to business, industry and the public service. Commercial rates are charged to clients, fees are paid to staff consultants, there are full-time managers and clerical staff and there is a glossy corporate image to the operation. In the third year (1991) of its operation it turned over A$1 million (c. £400,000) and is poised to return a healthy surplus to the two academic adult education Schools.

- The Community Consultancy Group is in contrast to this. It is aimed at the generally impoverished community sector of adult education and offers its services of similar types to TDS in a mode which reflects the values and orientation of that sector. While highly professional, it is not glossy. Staff contribute part of their own community service activity to the Group and while direct costs are recovered it does not aim to return a surplus on all of its activities.

- The Language and Literacy Centre operates in yet another mode which in some respects is a hybrid of the other two, but also contains a strong research component in its activities. There is far more central government funding in this area and the Centre has established itself as one of the main locations nationally for applied research and development. Unlike projects in the other two centres, projects in Language and Literacy typically contain a mix of applied research, consultancy, curriculum development and evaluation.

New directions

Traditionally there has been very little research in adult education in Australia, but there is a major need for such research. Examples of the kinds of projects which make a contribution to research as well as to the pressing needs of the field are the mapping the extent of functional illiteracy in Australia, the involvement of Aboriginal people in identifying directions for Aboriginal community development and study of the learning implications and opportunities during the shutdown period of a major industrial plant. What is important now is not just the undertaking of particular projects and responding to the opportunities which funding bodies provide, but to start to make a contribution to the conceptualisation, portrayal and making meaning of the field through scholarship and writing more generally. This is one of the areas in which the universities have a special role and is one which we have set as a priority for future development.

Ironically, in all this, adult education departments need to become more like other departments which are forging a role for themselves in the new responsive culture of higher education and not pretend to be that which they have failed to become. Too much of the vision of adult education has come from looking to the past, a misty-eyed idealisation of the past at that. We see the future as drawing together the best of the past traditions: of adult education as vocation as well as adult education for vocational purposes, of research and scholarship in active collaboration with practitioners, of teaching for formal awards together with professional development and challenge, of contributing to as well as critiquing policies. To be effective in this we believe that it is necessary to have a critical mass, this is probably smaller than that which has come about at UTS, but is much larger than the typical adult education department of the past. During a time in which there is more teaching of adults than there is of children we see a shift in this direction as necessary and inevitable.

THEORIES-IN-USE, REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND THE TEACHING OF ADULTS: PROFESSIONAL CULTURE IN PRACTICE

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Introduction

THE "reflective practitioner" approach to professional practice (Schön, 1983, 1987) is gaining considerable attention and public acceptance within many professions. A central notion within this approach is the concept of "theories-in-use", which simply means that professionals use knowledge (i.e. both formal and informal theories) to design their action. Theories-in-use inform and define theories-of-action.

Although most academics are familiar with formal, explicit theories, the concept of "theories-in-use" extends beyond this conventional definition, and can include, for example, the knowldege/information that a tennis player uses in designing strokes and movements within a rally. Theories-in-use therefore refer to implicit, informal and incidental information/knowldege which guides and assists the design of action within an ongoing and dynamic situation.

All action (conscious and unconscious) is purposeful because it attempts to fulfil a function and/or achieve an objective either consciously or unconsciously. This is more obvious with the tennis player who formulates a "theory" concerning a legal stroke which his/her opponent cannot reach or return legally or easily, thus assisting in the short-term objective of winning the point which is embedded within the long-term objective of winning the match. Equally, a professional engaging in complex action can be held to design his/her action in a purposeful manner in an attempt to achieve a given end or objective. The basis of this design is cultural knowledge (in contrast to the biological knowledge underpinning unconscious reflexes) which can include explicit technical, formal knowledge, explicit previous experiential knowledge, and implicit, informal knowledge based on previous experience and the unique circumstances of the present problem situation.

Schön (1983, 1987) and Argyris and Schön, (1974) view theories-in-use in terms of situational information and understanding concerning the idiosyncratic and unique dynamics, aspects and characteristics of a given problem situation the professional agent is attempting to deal with. More specifically, and this appears to be the essence of "reflective practice", the agent's interpretation of a given situation is viewed as a "theory" (or set of theories), and as such may be subject to bias, unjustified assumption and factual/interpretive error, and thus requires constant vigilance in its surfacing, testing and amendment. This approach is essentially Popperian in its emphasis upon "theory" and the insistence on the testing (falsification) of such theories. The main difference is that whereas Popper is concerned with explicit formal theory in academic contexts, the "theories-in-use" concept resides at an informal implicit level, can be extended to virtually every type of human action in non-academic and non-professional contexts, and involves the difficult notion of hidden, implicit and tacit "theories" underlying action.

Formal, technical knowledge and past experience is fundamentally limited in scripting current action for a given unique situation in the present (Usher and Bryant, 1989; Boreham, 1988; Eraut, 1985; Argyris and Schön, 1974). Therefore, all professional action is deemed to necessarily involve informal "theories-in-use" which "fill-in" the gaps left by, and go beyond, prior technical and experiential knowledge which deal with generalised, prototypical and previously hypothesised/encountered situations respectively.

"Theories-In-Use"

Theories-in-use may be better understood in terms of the different levels they occupy in operation. These levels occur in terms of Conscious Awareness, Relevance for Action, and Superficial vs Deep.

(a) Level of Conscious Awareness

There are three levels of conscious awareness:

(i) **Conscious and public** ... theories-in-use at this level are conscious and are publicly expressed. Argyris and Schön refer to these as theories-in-use. Within an adult education context this type of theory-in-use may include general opinions and attitudes concerning self-directed learning, Andragogical principles, student-centred approaches to teaching, the concepts of empowerment and emancipation, the role of formal academic disciplines, and the definition of "education" itself. At this level the individual adult education practitioner may also include and espouse his/her practice with regard to these issues. Additionally, espoused theories-in-use could include much less esoteric issues and refer to the quality of coffee, the weather, a particular essay or class, or individual student. The key feature of this level of theories-in-use is that they are public and as such only contain information, opinion, beliefs and attitudes which can be reasonably sustained and understood, even if others may not agree with them.

(ii) **Conscious and private** ... at this level theories-in-use are conscious (i.e. the individual holding them is aware of them) however, they are kept private and are not for general public airing or discussion. They may be kept totally private and not discussed or shared with anyone, but more usually they are shared with selected others who are privy to the secretive and controversial nature of these theories-in-use. "Selected others" may include friends outside of work, colleagues at work, spouse, parents, children or acquaintances (e.g. striking up a conversation with a total stranger during a ten-hour airplane flight to Los Angeles). As may be surmised by the secretive and private nature of these theories-in-use, their content is usually critical and personal. For example, an adult education practitioner may dislike his/her boss, hold a very low opinion of a student's or colleague's intellectual ability, believe that adult education is second-rate compared to its foundation disciplines but be instrumentally motivated to pursue ambitious career plans within it, believe that any form or content of formal adult education amounts to conditioning and ideology (including that which draws attention to the conditioning, ideological process) yet remain as a practitioner within it.

(iii) **Unconscious and unknown** ... theories-in-use at this level are unconscious and unknown to the individual holding them, despite the fact that these theories are centrally involved in the design of action within professional practice. This level and type of theories-in-use are the most difficult to understand or surface, yet are regarded by Argyris and Schön as the most important and the ones that reflection should be focussed upon. Contradictions between espoused theories-in-use (Conscious and Public) and actual theories-in-use (Unconscious and Private) are regarded as the most important source of failure to engage in double-loop learning. Single loop learning involves instrumental, technical and tactical learning within a given set of goals or objectives, which themselves are not questioned or reflected upon, and is more usually found within the conscious and public/private levels of theories-in-use. Double-loop learning involves critical reflection upon and re-definition of goals and objectives. If some theories-in-use are unconscious and unknown yet they specify goals and objectives which action is designed to realise, the practitioner is executing action to achieve goals and objectives he/she is not aware of, and therefore, cannot change, hence the need to surface and reflect upon such theories-in-use. An example of this type of theory-in-use is where an adult educator claims to use a student-centred approach to learning (Espoused Theory) but his/her actual theory-in-use, the one that drives the design and implementation of his/her action, is the conventional didactic, teacher-content led approach. The adult educator in this example believes his/her espoused theory and remains blissfully unaware of the actual theory being used, and as such cannot surface or reflect upon the real goals and objectives that he/she is attempting to achieve. At this level, theories-in-use are value judgements and because these theories are translated into action which influences the behaviour of others, they can be considered attempts to bring about change in others in accordance with those values whilst claiming other, contradictory, goals and objectives.

(b) Relevance for Action

Very generally and simplistically, there are two categories of relevance for action with regard to theories-in-use. The first category are those theories-in-use that are relevant for current action, either in the sense that they indicate that some new action needs to be taken (e.g. theory=students losing the meaning of part of a lecture; action=slow down delivery and simplify), or in the sense that a theory-in-use has already informed earlier action (e.g. where an actual theory contradicts an espoused theory as in the example in the previous section). Where a theory has informed an action, the practitioner needs to monitor and evaluate the success of the theory, but where this is an unconscious and unknown theory, this is impossible. The second category of theory-in-use is where a theory is irrelevant to a current action either because it is simply nothing to do with it (e.g.a particular theory about the laziness of a given student has nothing to do with the theories-in-use involved in writing a conference paper), or because the holder of the theory decides that no further action is either possible or necessary (e.g. when a practitioner decides he/she can do nothing about a student he/she believes is lazy?).

(c) Superficial vs Deep Theories-In-Use

Some theories-in-use may be relatively superficial and transitory (e.g. the time the staff meeting commences), whilst others may be very deep and significant in influencing a practitioner's professional life (e.g. education is the only means by which society can achieve a more rational, civilised, and essentially human form of existence). Both types of theories-in-use are relevant to action, however, the nature of the action varies between short-term, transitory and explicit, in contrast to the long-term, endemic and implicit action defined by deep theories-in-use. The latter are also particularly prone to the contradiction between espoused and actual theories-in-use.

Model I and Model II Theories-In-Use

Argyris and Schön (1974) elaborate at great length on the intricacies of theories-in-use but then identify a single theory-in-use which they claim virtually all professionals use without being aware of it. In other words, in Argyris and Schön's opinion the vast majority of professionals' espoused theories-in-use contradict the actual theory-in-use they are using, and the latter invariably conforms to a single pattern, referred to as Model I. The endemic nature of Model I theories-in-use is due to socialisation both culturally and professionally and, therefore, can be regarded as symptomatic of international and professional cultures. Argyris and Schön suggest an alternative, preferred theory-in-use (Model II) which they argue produces double-loop learning and effective, competent professional action. The key to competent action is learning. Model I produces very limited learning and creates self-fulfilling prophecies, whereas Model II creates an openness of information and feedback upon "theories" in use thus ensuring double-loop learning, trust and high risk taking in formulating and testing theories.

Model I Theory-In-Use

This theory-in-use is characterised by the constant and vigorous attempt to define and achieve goals, and is epitomised by the "strong leader" stereotype involving unilateral power and control in resisting others' attempts to grasp and maintain the initiative and set the agenda. Unilateral design and management of the local environment/situation is sought by the secret planning of action, either in isolation by an individual, or in conspiracy with others. To control and retain control over the agenda is defined as "winning", but to lose the initiative and to be seen to allow goals and objectives to be changed is regarded as "losing", a sign of weakness, and is to be avoided at all costs. These strategies are executed in a diplomatic, reasonable and thoroughly self-protective and deceptive manner by avoiding expressing negative emotions and the use of inferred categories (e.g. "participation", "communication", "reflection", "policy", "consultation", "evaluation", "process", "mutual interests"), which create ambiguity, defensiveness and suspicion in the receiver concerning the agent's true meaning. An ambiguity which can be denied later as very understandable but nevertheless erroneous and certainly unintended. In this manner the agent unilaterally protects him/herself and others by witholding information and failing to declare his/her real intentions, a witholding which itself is either denied and/or which the agent is not aware of. This produces defensiveness and suspicion in others and leads to a low-risk and low-trust environment in which the open testing of "theories" is inhibited and genuine feedback on behavioural outcomes is impossible.

In the context of adult education, this type of behaviour may be present in the way practitioners deal with students and colleagues. The previously cited example of the espoused student-centred teacher will be controlling the situation and its agenda, and will invoke inferred categories (e.g. passive students = "professional colleagues/ active learners", monologue = "open discussion", thick students = "early problems in learning/rich in practical insights", I'm in control = "with your permission"). In this instance the professional is protecting himself and the students. This can be done in a conscious and aware sense such that the professional knows his/her opinion of the students and the true nature of the process he/she and the students are engaged, in but will not disclose to the students in a direct manner, hence the use of inferred categories. Alternatively, and more seriously, the professional may not even be aware of his/her deceptive and protective strategies and actually believes his/her espoused theory. The latter is the usual Model I pattern, and blocks double-loop learning and true reflection. This is typical of the content-led curriculum despite espoused but contradictory theories claiming to address process.

Another possible example of Model I patterns of theories-in-use within adult education is the much beloved and hallowed Andragogy. Model I does not specify which specific goals and objectives could form the focus of a given theory-in-use. Any goal or objective could be approached in a unilateral controlling, protective and deceptive manner. Andragogy espouses student-centred and self-directed learning and places student experience at the heart of the learning process. However, despite the apparent liberal and open nature of its basic principles, it could be argued that its imposition and the insistence on its use (more so in the US), is characteristic of the Model I theory-in-use.

Model II Theory-In-Use

The opposite of Model I is *not* Model II. Model I emphasises control and the opposite of control is lack of control. Model II suggests the need for bilateral and cooperative control sharing. It also suggests that practitioners should regard their opinions and beliefs as "theories" in the truest sense i.e. these are tentative, open to question, crucially depend on evidence, are changing, cannot be applied out of context without amendment or abandonment, require public debate and verification, cannot be mistaken for truth, are abbreviated, summarised interpretations and always beg a question. In other words, all professionals should adopt the attitude of a "theory" in understanding their own practice, that of their peers and clients. This attitude will lead to honest and accurate surfacing of theories-in-use and their testing including the goals and objectives of such theories, thus ensuring double-loop learning. It may be paradoxical that within an academic community which prides itself on its ability to deal with theories (i.e. formal theories), it is just as inept as any other profession in dealing with the informal and implicit "theories-in-use" that drive practice.

The fundamental rationale for adopting Model II theories-in-use is that effective and competent action is impossible without equally effective and competent information and knowledge generation processes i.e. learning. Any process that inhibits or distorts the surfacing and testing of information (theories) which influence the design of an action is bound to render that action incompetent and ineffective.

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THE CHANGING CULTURE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION: TEACHING WHAT WE KNOW

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Background

IN traditional medical education the "master" clinician teacher imparts knowledge to the "novice" learner in what appears to the learner to be a very mysterious and mystical process—the master at work! This method is highly criticized because it inadequately prepares future practitioners for the ever changing world of patient care, and it is antithetical to all tenets of adult education. Medical schools in several countries are embracing a new vision for training physicians. The culture is finally changing and accepting a new philosophy, i.e., Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Although PBL is an improvement over traditional methods, it has drawbacks because tutoring occurs in a non-clinical vacuum that does not prepare the learner for the real world.

The training of residents—medical school graduates—is very different, in the United States, from undergraduate training. In residency education, clinical teaching—the process of transferring expert knowledge (the artistry of medicine) to learners by helping them to develop problem-solving strategies that reconstruct their knowledge around patient problems—is live. This is how all medical education should be delivered! How do expert clinical teachers teach? How do they translate what they do as practitioners to others regardless of where they are on the learning curve? Schön's (1987) model of reflective practice provides a conceptual framework for answering these questions. The reflective practice model mixes the science of medicine, i.e., the zone of mastery, with the art of medicine, a zone characterized by uniqueness, conflict and ambiguity! By using this model, clinical teachers help learners (1) to organize their knowledge and skill around practice; (2) to recognize and address the conflict, ambiguity and uniqueness characteristic to each case; (3) to construct and reconstruct knowledge and skill around the surprises they encounter in patient care and other aspects of the health care role; (4) to experiment carefully, wisely and effectively to address conflict, ambiguity and uniqueness; and (5) to reflect on their professional performance and alter practices appropriately (Fox & Mold, 1990).

Schön's Model of Reflective Practice stresses that: (1) there are no routine cases, and (2) good clinicians are good problem framers—they have more procedural knowledge. Professionals frame problems in ways they can solve them. As they solve problems they work through a five stage process: (1) Knowing-in-action, (2) Surprise, (3) Reflection-in-action,(4) Experimentation, and (5) Reflection-on-action. How does Schön's framework translate to the real world of clinical teaching in undergraduate and graduate medical education?

Method

A grounded theory approach (ethnographic interview) was used in a pilot study to explore the above question (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The predominant research question was: "How do good clinical teachers translate and express their *knowing-in-action* that is embedded in experience to learners?" Residents from departments of Family Medicine and Surgery (two medical colleges) identified their "above average" clinical teachers and specified why they thought they were above average. After obtaining resident responses, faculty members were contacted, were told they had been identified as good clinical teachers, and were asked if they would agree to be interviewed on how they teach. If individuals agreed, they were sent the first four interview questions two weeks prior to the interview to facilitate their thinking about clinical teaching encounters.

All interviews were conducted by the author, were taped and transcribed. The interviews were fairly unstructured, allowing individuals to explore and to reflect on what they do to promote learning, to help residents learn from their experiences, to socialize them into the culture of medicine and how they do all of this. Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was used to guide the interviews (Flanagan, 1954). The interviewer began by asking physicians to reveal a teaching encounter they believed went exceptionally well—in terms of the learner progressing in understanding or clinical expertise. They described everything they remembered happening in that encounter. Conversely, they were asked to describe an encounter they thought went exceptionally poorly.

Results

To date, eight individual interviews have been conducted. Interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 2 hours. To address credibility (trustworthiness) of the findings, four individuals reviewed the transcripts. Characteristics of the physician teachers, examples of how physician responses fit Schön's model, themes that emerged from the interviews, implications these characteristics and themes have for professional education, and how this method of teaching can be incorporated into existing curricula, PBL or traditional, will be discussed.

Characteristics of physician teachers

Several themes emerge that reflect common characteristics of "excellent" clinical teachers. These physicians are clinically competent, very comfortable with their role as mentor and teacher, and:

1. View learners as collaborators solving patient problems together;
2. Are very supportive of learners allowing them to make medical decisions without unnecessary intervention;
3. Are comfortable taking risks with learners to assure that residents become fully competent practitioners;
4. Are open to learners' opinions;
5. Praise learners for their successes;
6. Respect learners and colleagues;
7. Are able to admit when they are vulnerable in a teacher/learner encounter;
8. Admit when they make mistakes;
9. Recognize when a learner is having difficulty and know what to do;
10. Reflect on the residents' learning and understand their frames of reference;
11. Find ways to involve learners with patients; and
12. Are open to criticisms of how they teach.

The "fit" with Schön's model

The interviewees described how they work with residents in ways that reflected the stages of Schön's model. Examples were:

Knowledge-in-Action:

Dr. N: [Problem Framing] I try to expand the question a little to try to force them to crystallize the question a little better. The way I organize them is I try to ask the type of questions that force them to be organized before they can respond to it....I guess what I would do is ask them questions that I think would help us to answer what the problem is. In hopes that if they already have that information then they will understand that information is important in formulating what the problem is, or if they don't have that information to help them recognize that they were perhaps lacking some piece of information they needed in order to solve the ambiguity.

Surprise:

Dr. B: So before we went in there I said, actually to my surprise, "I was excited about seeing somebody who we didn't understand and who had something chronic." It was a genuinely sort of positive interest in seeing this person as opposed to "oh no, it's five o'clock and we have to admit her and what a pain in the neck." The resident was a bit sort of taken off balance by that. I explained to him that sometimes it's fun to see people that are mystifying because we sometimes get their input in a different way if we think about it as a puzzling case as opposed to a pain in the neck....It dawned on me when you asked me about surprises, that that might be a key question. If I interpret that [surprise] in a negative way on an average day then I'm not having much fun. So surprises that are interpreted as a positive thing tell me about the sort of mind set of anybody.

Reflection-in-Action:

Dr. P: On Tuesday, I was rounding with the service. The intern said, "This is what we think is going on" and then there was this lo-o-o-ong silence and I said, "OK, what are you going to do?" He said "Here's what I want to do" and I said, "OK, now tell me why, why are we thinking this?" and he thought a minute, and then he said why he wanted to do what he wanted to do. I said, "Well have you thought about this?" [meaning something different from what the resident was suggesting] and he said "Yes, it could be." And we talked about it. I said, "OK, what would you like to know about this? What's puzzling to you about this?" I just let him control the process as much as I could at that point.

Experimentation:

Dr. H: Ideally, I would say pose your hypothesis and construct a design to see if it answers your hypothesis ... Sometimes you have to do educated experimentation. There will be times when your "experiment" does not come out like you think it should, but that tells you just as much as when it does come out.

Reflection-on-Action:
[when the experiment works]
Dr. C: I guess I take the "Little Jack Horner" approach, stick in your thumb and pull out a plum and say, "My what a good boy am I." Ah, what happens ... Two things happen, one, you're somewhat impressed— "geez maybe they really know what they're talking about, boy this is really great." Then I guess the other side of it is, that's the excitement and the seduction if you will, and you're tempted to now make this your dogma. You tried it once and it worked, now it becomes fail-safe, then it becomes dogma. Hopefully, the other side of that happens too, and that is, "okay I'm not turned off by this let's think about it cautiously." I think when it works the temptation is to jump on the band wagon. I have that temptation to jump on the band wagon but I also try to maintain a healthy skepticism, and be careful about not just going with every new thing down the road every time.
[when it doesn't work]
Dr. C: I think what you're alluding to "what happens when it doesn't work," maybe that's going to be the next question—is "what happens when it doesn't work?" It's the opposite. You can't be so overcome by the fact that it failed, if you will, that you never try it again. So I think it's a balance between those two things. When it works positively, there's an excitement, you think about it, it makes sense, this is good. But then I think you should also maintain a certain level of skepticism. I think our experiments in the literature show us that.

Themes that emerged

Six main themes emerged from the eight interviews. They were:

- Personal Teaching Style and Philosophy
- How the Teacher Views Learners
- Teaching Assessment Strategies
- Learner Performance Assessment Strategies
- What Learners Want From Their Teachers
- Constraints Within the Clinical Teaching Encounter

Implications for professional education

What does all of this mean for education within the medical culture? Schön's model of reflective practice is applicable to medical education. It provides educators with a tool that helps them to organize their learners' knowledge and experience in a focused way to help learners become better problem solvers. Using the model has several benefits. Working through the five stages:

- offers a method for self-assessment, as well as teacher assessment of learners,

- helps the learner to recognize learning needs—knowledge gaps—in general or specific knowledge domains,

- focuses the learner on each specific patient problem so s/he can find direction for narrowing the gap or deficiency,

- offers the learner immediate feedback on each specific patient problem,

- encourages self-directed learning, i. e., gives the learner "control over the exercise of intentions, decisions, and actions in a given situation....decisions associated with implementing a plan for learning directed toward altering professional performance" (Fox, 1991).

- prompts episodic rather than rote memory by helping the learner reflect on episodes of past experiences.

Incorporating the reflective practice model into existing curricula

Many believe it is time to change the traditional medical education culture from a focus on classroom lectures that emphasize rote memorization and test-taking ability to a focus on a curriculum that encompasses developing clinical expertise in all four years of medical training, i.e., strategies necessary to solve patient problems in the real world medicine. Physicians who are responsible for residency education often complain that their "interns" (first year post medical training) have to be retrained because of the dysfunctional undergraduate training they received. To avoid this, the educational process that transforms novices into expert clinicians must be a continuum beginning in pre-professional training, continuing throughout residency education and beyond? Schön's model provides a tool for professionals to critically evaluate their own practices. To incorporate this model into the undergraduate curriculum, educators first must train clinical teachers in the method and techniques of guiding learners through the model. The model is not mysterious and mystical in nature, it is precisely how physicians frame and solve problems. What we are teaching the physician educator is how to make what is implicit and unconscious, explicit and conscious to the learner.

Schön's model blends naturally with the PBL curriculum. Instead of using paper cases, however, the clinical cases should be presented using simulated patients—actors and actresses trained to exhibit certain "chief complaints." Traditional curriculum needs more overhauling to make the model usable. In many medical schools in the first year of pre-professional training, there is a year long course in "The Doctor-Patient Relationship." Many of these courses use small group discussion as a primary means of delivering content—not too different from PBL. It would be easy to mold these courses to use the model with case presentations. The same format could be used in the second year when students learn to interview patients. Courses that are designed in the traditional lecture—little discussion—format would have to be redesigned to one of the two scenarios described above.

It is time to alter a culture that puts learners in a one down position. It is time to practice the principles of adult education in the medical culture and empower learners to self-assess their learning needs to help them focus on areas where learning and reflection on their learning may alter practice, improve performance, and ultimately improve patient outcomes! This is a goal of medical education!

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AND FINALLY: THE CHANGING CULTURES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PRACTICES

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Preamble

THE title for this paper is taken from the invitation to submit abstracts for consideration for the 1992 SCUTREA Annual Conference on Changing Cultures and Adult Learning. It is fitting. So often institutional cultures and practices are considered finally, belatedly, if at all, and then we wonder at and mourn the barrenness of our labours to enhance adult learning opportunities. Written from a university perspective, the paper is informed particularly by the processes of institutional change and resistance to change in British universities, in the context of changing culture in broader English if not British society. It suggests that if we are serious about enhancing adult learning we should perhaps start rather than finish with the cultures and practices – changing or unchanging – of educational institutions, without being bounded by them and what they can do.

Which "Educational Institutions"?

Having alluded to the possibly limiting perspectives of my university working base, let me immediately ask "which educational institutions", and offer the following simple listing. I do not propose to consider each systematically.

> (a) specialised adult education institutes and centres of different kinds and traditions – currently confronting higher than usual levels of uncertainty following recent legislation;
>
> (b) colleges of further education (CFEs) – into which much of the education of adults has migrated, and which in many cases have become all age if not predominantly adult institutions;
>
> (c) higher education institutions (HEIs) – in which continuing education (CE) in its various manifestations is acquiring much higher salience as part of the mission and business of the institution, although its definition, scope and profiling vary greatly from place to place;
>
> (d) community movements of "active citizens" dedicated to usually single-issue social reform and employing methods sometimes called informal education;
>
> (e) "industry", or more precisely employing organisations of all kinds and sizes, public as well as private sector, some of which – mainly large employers within the private sector – are acquiring the aspirations and some of the characteristics of the "learning organisation" (Senge, 1990, Pedler et.al. 1991, Jones and Hendry 1992, Burgoyne 1992, Mumford 1992).

Learning Organisations in a Learning Society?

Mention of the learning company takes us to the now familar proposition that we are becoming, or need to become, a "learning society". The term, usually associated with the name and work of Torsten Husen (Husen 1974, 1986), is surviving transplantation into British society which is usually characterised as pragmatic, practical and rather opposed to grand designs and conceptualisations of this kind. The RSA, through Sir Christopher Ball (Ball 1991, 1992), has taken a lead. Let us put aside the sceptical question how it can be that a "learning society" re-elects the same party to power for so many consecutive terms – what is it that is being learned and not learned? – and accept that the power-brokers in industry, the professions and government have reached a consensus that only a learning society has the power to survive and thrive, economically, in current circumstances. Does this represent a changing culture relevant to adult learning? Or merely the aspiration of the corporate state to mould its human resources so as to survive economically in the New Europe?

Who is to learn what and how, in the "learning society"? Is adults' learning to be widened and enhanced, or perhaps just more narrowly channeled? Who is to own the learning? What does this mean for "educational institutions" in the narrow sense of schools and colleges as normally understood, or in the wider sense of educative institutions employed here?

At the heart of this question is a familiar tension: human resource development (HRD) for economic activity and international competitiveness; or personal development for fuller individual and civic life as an active participative citizen. Whether this is a dichotomy or an emerging unity will partly determine whether the emergent learning society is "utopic" or "dystopic".

Present trends towards societal dichotomisation – the widening gap between rich and poor, the creation of a dis-eased and self-destructive underclass, the building of fortress Europe – do not bode well, but of course one can extract and amplify to sketch a picture for the future to suit one's mood and case. Can we discern a matching set of signs and trends to suggest that an active assertive citizenry is minded to seize learning opportunities for both individual well-being and collective good?

Perhaps my two categories of non-traditional educative institutions – social movements and industrial corporations – provide a base for optimism. Certainly, notions and practices of action learning and experiential learning are gaining strength in these areas, consciously and overtly in some industrial corporations. For some of these the idea of the whole workforce as an energised, curious, motivated learning community is becoming commonplace, and its practical expression a managerial concern. IBM provides an international example, Rover a more local one. (Braham 1992).

Learning is an activity, and very often in part a social, communal activity. Experiential learning and its identification and assessment is also commonly and necessarily shared and collaborative. The accreditation of learning – its weighing, measuring, valuing an rewarding – is also a social process belonging in the public arena.

Although learning is strictly an individual and intra-personal affair, we have come to accept with little demur the idea that organisations and societies can and should "learn", as recent activities of the Royal Society for the Arts demonstrate. We may be less aware how much of learning, to be recognised and valued, requires the structures, supports and legitimation of formal educative, if not educational, institutions, and large ones at that.

The Excluded

Small may be beautiful in Schumacher's terms (Schumacher 1974), but big still looks more likely and more powerful. There is little to suggest that organisations are not continuing to get bigger, with industrial and financial mergers and takeovers mirrored in aggregations, cartels and other associational forms among educational institutions. The vocabulary may be different – for example consortia, franchising, associate college, validation, as well as amalgamation, but the trends appear similar.

As organisations, networks, and networks of organisations tie up increasing amounts of resources, including the resource of information and access to information, so the excluded become an information–poor underclass with little access to socially valued knowledge. In a society more sharply divided between those with and those without access to information and socially valued learning we need to ask what learning and action routes are left to those excluded from powerful and empowering organisations and networks. Los Angeles in the Spring of 1992 provided one answer. Thus, a little further down the road we find ourselves asking about the fragmentation of society, the destruction of the social fabric, and the need for a consciously political effort to recreate the polity and civic society. Once we get that far, we encounter the anxieties and paradoxes endemic in individual liberalism which resists social engineering but relies too trustingly on the good in society to reproduce itself.

There is not the space to follow this digression further into the changing culture and structure of society, and the alternative scenarios that may wait around the corner. We may instead ask what this changing social context implies for educational institutions and their cultures.

The Changing University

There is a large and vigorous literature on the idea, nature and mission of the university, and a burgeoning debate on the place and character of the university in a system of mass higher education (see for instance Barnett 1990, Duke 1992, Shattock 1991, 1992). "The university" has come to embrace all of what we call higher education in Britain, and there are commendable and egalitarian democratic (as well as less pretty) forces at work to lower the divide between further and higher education. As much of formal adult education has migrated into further education, and more and more adults are finding their way into HE on one basis or another, we can allow that "the university" and certainly "the college" in its broader American sense has a powerful influence over the prospects for adult learning and adult

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learners: directly for those enrolled on courses, and indirectly in what it implies for the creation, ownership and nature of, and accessibility to, knowledge.

Colleges (in the broadest encompassing sense) live in and off the society. Most are directly and heavily dependent on (central) government. Few have been clear and articulate about their mission. The term still feels a little alien, grafted on where unspoken understandings and practices sufficed as a condition of winning grant or, in the more market-oriented new world, contracts from government. Missions and planning statements have been written largely to order: a means of winning essential resources in a tougher and more hostile environment. HEIs have with few and rare exceptions fallen quickly into line to do the bidding of government – a new management structure here, an EHE bid there, an appraisal system to win claw-back payroll funds, an Audit Unit to scrutinise quality before the Government sends in its own scrutineers, and efficiency gains to "do more with less".

There is nothing venal about this. Ironically the only escape is to beat the government at its own game, privatise entirely and charge full market costs to those who can afford to pay. Despite the claims of the academy to provide a disinterested source of intellectual inquiry and social criticism, HEIs must at least partly identify with and attune to the changing dominant culture if they are to survive in any recognisable form. The same goes for (opted out) schools and (autonomous) colleges of further education, as indeed for special purpose adult education institutions like the WEA and the long-term colleges, and for the national umbrella organisation NIACE which has to earn its way in the market place with its three substantial (and revenue-earning) subsidiaries, ALBSU, REPLAN and UDACE, stripped away by government action.

Changing Culture: Towards the Learning Organisation?

So educational institutions appear to have bent freely with the wind, and few have been broken. Have they been transformed by the society from which they live and which they claim to serve? In what senses do their changing cultures and practices enhance adults' learning?

The literature – and maybe the "senior common room", if not by now converted to make more space for PCs or spillover seminars – is nicely divided as to whether there has been transformation or whether change is no more than superficial. Does mass higher education, and the "adultification of the academy", mark the end of civilisation as we know it? Or the transformation of a closed and incestuous into an open and creative human community? Or a gesture towards nineties politics, economics and demography in which little has really changed?

Is the production line – the socialisation process – still running much as before? – batch production to manufacturers' specifications in the tradition of "any colour so long as it is black"? Or has "adultification" become cultural transformation? Have we moved away from induction into an elite culture through which the bridges for working class students back to their "pre-intellectual world" and culture are kicked away, and into becoming an open learning centre which refills the tanks and recharges the batteries on an any-customer-served basis?

Some kinds of institutions, closed or total in Goffman's (1968) sense, may be able to maintain highly impermeable boundaries and protect themselves from external changes. MI5 is only slowly being levered open, and other protective and custodial services remain relatively impermeable. "Colleges" lack this (albeit brittle) advantage. The redundancy and demise of the "extramural department" (dying term for an increasingly outdated concept and arrangement) illustrates the permeation of the boundaries of HEIs and the increasing dissolution of its membership. It is increasingly difficult to say *who* the university is – its members, users, faculty and students. It is also ever harder to say *where* the university is, as courses are conducted not just on a non-award basis in extramural centres but also with, in and by industry for degrees or parts thereof, or franchised to local colleges, or validated in workplace and educational settings up and down the land. As to *what* HE is, and what it provides, there is a choice-point approaching as the system of NVQs and the currency of competences and outcomes approach closer to the academic heartland. Much of the education and training of 16-19 year olds and of adults beyond the academy, especially those within FE, is being redefined – but not necessarily transformed – by the new terminology driven especially by NCVQ.

It is less clear however that colleagues working for adults in FE have changed their values and purposes. The changing culture of FE as I experience it absorbs the new words, measures and discourse, and seeks to tolerate the new managerialism where this is also imposed, without very obviously changing what in my experience are basically liberal and humane values and purposes. The new managerialism expected of FE, with its talk of markets and throughputs, investment and rate of return, TQM and NVQs, may hide from casual observation a commitment to access and equal opportunity which I believe characterises the rejuvenated as well as part of the older culture of FE.

Poverty and Privilege

FE is the Cinderella of the post-compulsory system, and perhaps therefore the more sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged. "Adult education" remained until recently outside the door even of Cinderella's kitchen. The universities on the other hand have enjoyed the status of the master's study in the great house. Are their cultures and practices really changing, or merely bending a little in the wind?

There is great perturbation in higher education. The end of the binary divide signals not just the need to hold open the boundary between further and postbinary higher education for reasons of self-interest as well as on grounds of access and wider opportunity. It also signals a ruthless jockeying for position in a new league table in which the "real" – research-led – universities of international standing will try to win their resources without greatly increasing the number of students per member of academic staff, so preventing serious deterioration of the staff-student ratio.

Institutional culture becomes critically important when there is real choice of mission. Things normally understated if not unspoken may emerge into a more public arena. The opportunities, and risks, for change agents working to promote adult learning, may be sharply amplified. For them a "window of opportunity" may rapidly open and quickly close. (Note the significance and likely ephemerality of this popular bit of jargon – why is *its* "window of opportunity" open just now, in these times when we require "robustness" of all our arrangements?)

Measures and Means

If we are to exploit the potential for cultural change in HEI in the interests of adult learning, we need, in these times, some robust performance indicators with which to stake our claim and chart our progress. A few suitable PIs already exist, and a few CE colleagues have done work in this important area. UCACE is now involved in development work on Quality, which may be another route into devising and refining the indicators we need.

Some PIs will measure numbers, proportions and trends in respect of adult (or mature age) students in different programmes throughout the academy, as well as their admissions criteria, APEL and advanced standing concessions, and range of choice in curriculum and modes of delivery. Somewhat global measures such as these will require breaking down into age, gender and ethnicity cohorts and categories, as well as across subjects or cost centres of varying status and perceived difficulty.

Another set of indicators should be indirect, indicators of the institutional culture and its evolution. Some might concern staff development (or internal adult learning and CE). Others will have to do with equal opportunity behaviours of the institution towards all categories of staff as well as students.

Others again might seek to measure, or afford a surrogate for, the learning climate, the nature of student-staff relations and the levels of motivation, involvement and participation experienced by adult and other students.

The means to effect cultural change are more complex and elusive still. The University of Warwick has just completed a two year project funded by the Employment Department (Duke and Merrill 1992). The formal purpose was to widen the system of part-time degrees out from the arts and social studies base into the less accessible subject areas, but the contract also included, as its most important though unquantifiable purpose, to "mainstream" such provision into the normal thinking and behaviour of the institution – in other words to change the institutional culture in favour of adult access and learning. The lessons are still being digested, as are the changes themselves institutionally.

It is clear however that a range of strategies and intervention points is required if such a project is to meet with any lasting success. It invites sterility to argue that because one path is being tried all others should be left unexplored. Rather, multiple interventions – probes, try-outs, small-scale experiments, local initiatives – may set off institution-wide perturbation, connect up and reinforce one another. What sounded odd, offbeat, off, one year may be the next come to sound reasonable, normal, acceptable. A persistent murmur from below, an encouraging word from the top, several prods and probes from outside – from the relevant local environment to which the university is sensitive – may come together to shift attitudes and norms. A little pump-priming or innovation money which buys free space and gives jaded staff a fresh lease of life and energy, a few positive experiences of mature age students enlivening a leaden class, which get talked about in the Common Room or at the bar, may trigger off "me-too" initiatives even after the innovation fund has run out.

Part of the trick is to work with the grain of the institution, to attune to its distinctive culture and ethos and to insinuate adult learning opportunities in ways congenial and compatible in that culture. At my own institution I try to exploit a pride in energy, initiative and innovation, in championing new adult learning opportunities; only seldom do I risk the "not invented here" response by taking the line that an activity is tried and tested elsewhere so it is time to adopt it here. In other places, and at other times, the opposite approach may be more effective.

Ethics and Pragmatics

How far can one load more baggage onto the same old vehicles? Do old structures give only old solutions? How fast can and will the institution absorb change? How much should one protect people from anxiety by building in checkpoints and phased reviews? Is it a trial, an experiment, or for real? When is a bold shift more likely to win support, and when is evolution and incrementalism more sound?

Behind these practical questions of timing and tactics there lurks a moral question (dilemma at the risk of being paralysed): do you make explicit the intentions and likely implications of opening up the academy to adults – or taking it out to them where they are to be found? Or do you innovate by stealth, ignoring or obscuring the likely implications of an innovation (mature age students, part-time degrees, franchising or validation, credit transfer with modularisation), and hope that people get too far drawn in to be able later to engage reverse gear?

Like all moralities, it is a relative rather than an absolute matter – and tougher rather than easier for that reason. This is not to absolve one from being known for one's core values and purposes. There is no insuperable dilemma here. High intellectual standards, academic and intellectual integrity, are no preserve of the elite, middle or chattering classes. If the gold standard is indeed superior to silver or lead it is good enough for all our clients and not merely for those born with a gold (or silver) spoon. Working with the grain does not mean masking a commitment to social equity, active participatory citizenship, and equal opportunity. HEIs have to live, and hopefully thrive, in a market-oriented world, but the driving energy of organisations (which is why they are also, thankfully, "institutions") is that they are based on values and purposes which nowadays we try to convey in the idea of "mission".

The nineties do present a crisis for educational institutions of all kinds. It is not a simple matter of taking on or being beaten by government, society or "them". It may be more a matter or rediscovery of culture and identity, a confrontation for "mission" in which excessive academic individualism has to be reconciled, non-destructively, with the idea of a good communal or convivial "company man" [sic] in which individual purpose is harmonised with a wider public good. Meanwhile some convergence of the more imaginative learning companies and the more innovative HEIs will surely manifest itself in purpose, culture and the facilitation of adult learning.

There is nothing irreconcilable in all this. Changing institutional culture (changing practice flows from this and reinforces cultural change) does not mean betraying the core values of the liberal academy to which "adult learning" cleaves. It may mean some bruising encounters with selfish individualism, but the opening of the academy as a resource centre for adult learning – and so as a learning organisation – looks likely.

A Footnote

This paper seeks to float and connect some ideas about cultural change and learning in educational institutions, rather than provide answers. In this spirit, let us conclude by noting that the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is reconstituting its committee structure in 1992. In place of its Conference and International Services Committee, its Publications Committee, and its Research Library and Information Services Committee, it is setting up an Equal Opportunities Committee and three other committees linked into this, for Women, Ethnic Minorities, and Special Needs. At just the time when it has been thrust one might say brutally into the marketplace, this displays a confidence in values and purpose which other educational institutions might reflect upon.

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CULTURE CHANGE/CHANGING CULTURE: 'MULTI-SKILLING' THE PRACTITIONER IN POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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MUCH has been written over the last fifteen years about the changing skill requirements of the United Kingdom economy and the associated changes in working practices in the workplace (Atkinson and Meager 1990 and Phillimore 1990). These are encapsulated by the notions of 'multi-skilling' and 'flexibility'. In the past, workers in manufacturing industry, undertook repeated, particular and specialised tasks specific to their job role and function. However, the development of information technology and increased competitiveness within the global economy have made possible an increasing rate of innovation, creating the conditions for changes in the skills required by the workforce and the way work is organized. Productivity and profitability have been and are being restructured on the basis of smaller work-forces producing more 'efficiently'. Higher productivity is the outcome of increased flexibility due to and resulting in multi-skilling, in which workers take on a range of tasks, transferring skills from one task to another. The routine of the production line gives way to the various roles of the team, the plumber to the technician, hierarchical to participative management, the sufficiency of initial training to lifelong learning. A culture change is apparently underway in the workplace, one which has become associated in certain areas with the notion of 'post-Fordism' (Murray 1989).

Post-Fordism is a contested concept (Hirst 1989 and Sivanandan 1990). How far it accurately describes trends within the economy and society and should be embraced or contested in theory and practice is ultimately a matter of value and opinion. The extent and the significance of multi-skilling and flexibility, including their political significance, are a matter of much debate. They tend to be put forward as technical requirements, a function of economic change. It can also be argued that they offer the workforce more interesting forms of labour with variety replacing routine. However, their role in providing a base for an attack on the rights and power of labour is also apparent. The value of labour and the strength of Trade Unions to negotiate is partly a function of the scarcity of particular skills in the labour market (Ashton 1986). Thus, the tight control that has been kept on entry to the higher skill occupations, including professions, by the rationing of initial training opportunities and the demarcations within the workplace. Multi-skilling breaks down established patterns, undermining the demarcations which helped to maintain higher levels of employment and disrupting the traditional negotiating base for Trade Unions. Similarly, flexibility can be seen as partly an and part of the attack on labour. From the high skilled, flexibility is demanded as a condition for keeping a job. From the low skilled, flexibility is demanded as a condition for obtaining a job. The flexible labour market is therefore one of uncertainty and threat for the labour force, divided into a core of full-time workers and a periphery of part-time and unwaged workers. In this context, multi-skilling has tended to be focussed on the more highly skilled, thereby reproducing and increasing the labour market disadvantage of the lower skilled, confining them to insecurity of the periphery (Atkinson and Meager 1990).

Be that as it may, the adherence to multi-skilling and flexibility cannot be doubted. Government policy documents have established these themes as key to economic competitiveness, for which it the role of the education and training service, including those engaged in the education and training of adults, to supply the necessary labour force (Training Agency 1989). Multi-skilling and flexibility can be argued to have provided the rationale for the increased support for the notion of lifelong learning during the 1980s. It has been and is part of the role of post-compulsory education and training to service this shift, to provide opportunities for people to be members of the multi-skilled workforce. Many of the 'reforms' we have witnessed are meant to increase the relevance of what education and training provides to the world of work and this includes multi-skilling and flexibility. We may debate the actual implications of, for example, National Vocational Qualifications, Enterprise in Higher Education, core skills, modularization, but key to their development has been an increasing emphasis on developing multi-skilled workers and providing opportunities for a workforce of lifelong learners for the economy.

Less has been said about post-compulsory education and training as an area of employment. Are multi-skilling and flexibility growing features of employment in our Further, Adult and Higher Education institutions? Is the culture change these institutions are meant to service also affecting them as places of work? If so, how are staff being trained and developed. if at all, to become multi-skilled and flexible?

There appear to be no clear answers to these questions, but I want to put forward a number of propositions as the basis for discussion and future research. It seems to me the trends towards multi-skilling and flexibility elsewhere in the economy are also to be found in institutions of post-compulsory education and training. They are integral features of the drives towards 'cost effectiveness' and 'efficiency'. To increase productivity in post-compulsory education and training - more students in and through the system at a lower cost to the state, if not the students - staff are being required to take on new tasks and roles and flexibility is grounded in the insecurity of employment experienced elsewhere. Some, particularly colleagues working in Adult Education, might argue that tranferring skills has always been necessary for practitioners. While there may be some truth in this, I would suggest the intensity of work being required is increasing as practitioners are having to take on new tasks and roles. Multi-skilling is becoming a more systematic feature of the workplace.

For example, lecturing and tutorial staff are being asked to take on marketing roles, adopt different teaching approaches, manage budgets and staff, write open learning materials, appraise staff, guide and counsel students. Demarcations of roles between lecturers and tutors, administrators and technical staff are breaking down as tasks mutate across boundaries of salary and status. For instance, there has been much debate about whether guidance staff should have a lecturing or non-lecturing status and what happens to lecturing roles when staff are asked to guide people through open learning packages, rather than lecture in the traditional sense? Not all of these changes are necessarily negative. However, change can take many forms and I would suggest multi-skilling in this context, as elsewhere, is partly and part of the assault on labour outlined above; an assault on what during the 1980s became one of the Conservative government's favourite targets, the education and training profession. It would be interesting to establish whether, as I suspect, there is an increasing proportion of staff employed on instructor, management, administrative and clerical grades rather than lecturing and tutor pay scales. The devaluing of skill, which can be the result of multi-skilling, is also apparent in the casualization of the workforce, the increased use of short term contracts. The recognition of the transferability of skill, which the educators and trainers of adults rightly celebrate, is therefore being used against us, as part of the reinforcement of labour market discipline associated with multi-skilling.

Do curriculum changes in the training and development of practitioners in post-compulsory education and training reflect and result in multi-skilling? Once again, this would need more detailed discussion and research. However, in general, I suspect we could answer in the affirmative. Short courses, open learning, modularisation all provide opportunities for practitioners to multi-skill themselves in a flexible way to match our own requirements for flexibility (Harrop and Woodcock 1992). Areas of practice are 'packaged' so that practitioners can acquire them as and when necessary. There also appears to have developed implicitly an area of 'core skills' for the practitioner; the notion of the 'reflective practitioner' with its focus on constant change and development (Schon 1991).

The notion of the reflective practitioner has become a key feature of professional development. However, there are limits to the way it is normally conceived. While reflection-in-action is constructed as a response to the epistemelogical limits of technical rationality in the sphere of professional practice, the philosophical idealism upon which it is based ignores its relationship to changing patterns of employment and working practices I have been outlining. There are economic and political limits to technical rationality which are being surpassed by the movement from Fordism to post-Fordism forms of organization and working. In other words, notions of reflection-in-action and the reflective practitioner need to be situated within the changes in the economy and society for a fuller appreciation of their significance. It is not simply the nature of professional practice that necessitates reflection-in-action, it is also part of and an outcome of a particular division of labour, in which multi-skilling and flexibility are key components.

In examining the issues, we are therefore confronted with a dilemma. The culture change of multi-skilling is affecting post-compulsory education and training and is reflected in and promoted by the curriculum offerings available to practitioners. In this context, lifelong learning does not appear to have the emancipatory significance we may want to see, but is more closely allied to the reinforcement of labour market discipline in the changing division of labour.

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SITUATING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN ITS POLITICAL CULTURE

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Abstract
This paper contrasts two models of Access to higher education – the post-war expansion of the late 1940s and the wider Access movement of the past ten years – and places each of them within the dominant political culture of their time.

BETWEEN 1945/46 and 1949/50 the universities expanded by over sixty per cent, from 51,600 full time students (virtually the same as 1938/39), to 85,400. (Gosden (1983), pp 141-2) This expansion reflected the post-war reconstruction planned during the war and the popular-front optimism and high expectations of a new welfare world after the war; but it also came to be influenced by the later-1940s Cold-war conservative notion of preservation rather than change. Certainly the Labour Government inherited a commitment to planning both from its collectivist past and from the reconstruction plans of the wartime Coalition Government to which many of its ministers had belonged. It was heavily influenced by a preoccupation with economic reconstruction: its commitment to greater equality and social security was subservient to this collectivist economic planning. Therefore education as a means of changing society was never a primary concern. (Barker, pp. 81-97)

The years of Coalition Government had to some extent mellowed the radicalism of people such as Atlee, Cripps and Ellen Wilkinson ('Red Ellen' who became Minister of Education in 1945), and intensified the moderation of the likes of Herbert Morrison. (Coates, pp.62-3 Vernon, passim) The Labour Government moved "steadily in pursuit of moderation". (Gordon, Aldrich and Dean, p.62) What it aimed at was "the broader dissemination of a tradition which, by the large, was accepted ... fairer shares, not a new society". In the field of education it was assumed that "all would be well if only the advantages of the old heaven and the old earth were spread more evenly. (Barker, pp. 137-8) Greater equality of opportunity rather than greater equality was the goal.

Within this moderate political culture, the Government's education policy was very largely confined to implementing the 1944 Education Act rather than introducing any new policies, or more radical changes. As far as higher education was concerned, Herbert Morrison made it clear in 1946 that the Government did not intend any "radical alteration of the existing relationship between the State and the Universities" and Ellen Wilkinson declared that "there is no wish to change the character of University education". (PRO, ED136/716)

As deputy Prime Minister in the Coalition Government, Clement Attlee had fully supported an expansion of at least fifty per cent after the war. When the universities expressed their reluctance to expand at this rate he considered this "a very serious matter, as we cannot hope to solve our post-war problems unless we can increase the supply of trained men and women in the various departments of our national life". (Gosden (1983), p.139) This provides one indication of the reason for the future Labour Government's expansionist policy for the universities: perceived manpower requirements rather than greater social justice.

After its election victory in 1945, the Labour Government immediately increased the grant to the universities and set up a committee on scientific manpower which recommended a doubling of the output of qualified scientists, a substantial increase in the number of humanities students, the founding of new universities and institutes of technology and more direct government involvement in the planning and development of higher education. (PRO, ED 136/717; Berdahl, pp. 74-5; Gosden (1983), p.141; Lawson and Silver, p.429; Lowe, p.59; Stewart, pp.46-7)

As the Committee's Report made clear:

> The main driving force for reform is quantitative : the demand on the one hand for more research and on the other for the education of more scientists, engineers, doctors, dentists and teachers. (PRO, ED 136/716)

It was within this framework of human resource development that the Labour Governments of 1945-51 planned to extend the opportunities of higher education to a wider cross section of the population and make it more accessible by increasing the number of places and reducing the financial barriers. (Berdahl, pp. 140 and 170)

The Government came to the conclusion that higher education should be more directly controlled and planned by the Government if it were to meet the needs of post-war society. The universities could not be trusted to introduce sufficiently substantial or speedy changes themselves. (PRO, ED 136/717 and 816) Some Labour backbenchers similarly called for greater state intervention, and for the Treasury, "as one of the largest contributors among those who pay the piper ... to call the tune". (Parliamentary Debates (1946), col. 1101) The universities' autonomy was still jealously guarded, but greater government influence over the nature and direction of higher education was exerted. (Berdahl, p.71; Stewart, pp.62-5) Berdahl, in his survey of British Universities and the State in 1959, regarded this as a "dramatic transition to positive state leadership in higher education". (Berdahl, p.68) Against this, one should consider Attlee's recollection:

> When I was in office, I steadily refused to try to increase the influence of the State on the Universities ... There are matters in which I think it is better to have trust and I think this is one of them. (Parliamentary Debates (1957), cols. 1125-1126)

Despite Attlee's trust, there was an expectation after 1945 that the universities should be made to fulfil their allotted role in the planned welfare state although it has already been pointed out that a "radical alteration of the existing relationship between the State and the Universities" was not intended.

One of the ways in which greater government control was implemented was through the UGC which was given powers to enquire into the financial needs of university education; to advise the Government as to the application of any grants made by Parliament; to collect, examine and make available information about university education and "to assist in consultation with the Universities and other bodies concerned, the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the Universities as may from time to time be required in order to ensure that they are fully adequate to national needs". (PRO ED 136/816) Ensuring financial accountability and the dissemination of information and planning to meet national needs were now all clearly within the UGC's brief. It had become "in effect a small Department of Government in charge of the Universities" which executed a policy of national priorities. (Berdahl, pp. 80 and 136)

The vice chancellors accepted the Government's right and duty to plan and influence the university system in this way and declared that they would be "glad to have a greater measure of guidance from Government" than in the past. (Dean, p.106; Stewart, p.58) Nevertheless, there was an initial reluctance on the part of the universities to commit themselves to the degree of expansion envisaged by the Barlow Committee and the Government. There were reservations about merely responding to manpower needs for fear of what this would do to the quality of university scholarship and learning in the long-term. Indeed, there was some expectation that numbers would fall "back to normal" once the ex-servicemen had been through the system. (Berdahl, pp. 84-6; Gosden (1976), p.429; Gosden (1983), pp. 142-3). However, the universities did acquiesce to an expansion of sixty per cent within five years. This increase was partly the result of the influx of ex-service men and women during this period and there was in fact a small decline in numbers between 1949-53 because of the loss of 24,000 ex-service students, but most of the increased number of places were filled by school leavers. (Gosden (1983) pp 141-2)

How was this achieved? Very largely by the power of the purse. The universities received more direct grant aid and became increasingly dependent on government funds. The annual recurrent grant to the universities rose from the pre-war figure of £2.25 million to £8 million in 1945/46 and £16.6 million by 1950/51. During the quinquennium 1947-52 the proportion of the universities' recurrent expenditure derived from government funds rose from just over a half to two-thirds. (PRO, ED 136/716; Gosden (1983), p.142; Lowe, p.60; Stewart, p.270).

The quinquennial funding was introduced in 1947 to facilitate more effective planning. More directly interventionist was the introduction of earmarked funding. The UGC reluctantly accepted the system of earmarking funds for special fields for reasons of national policy — to introduce new subjects or to secure rapid or large scale developments. Between 1947-52, twenty nine per cent of the recurrent grant was specially earmarked to encourage developments in science and technology, medicine, dentistry, agriculture and vetinary sciences, the social sciences, Oriental, African, Slavonic and East European studies, and for the newly established institutes of education. The national policy reasons for most of this earmarking were clearly manpower requirements. The social sciences were given special encouragement because economic and social issues were regarded as fundamental to the post-war planning of a more equitable welfare society. Oriental, African, Slavonic and East European studies were considered to be of national strategic importance. (PRO, CAB 134/723 and ED 136/816; Berdahl, pp. 143-4; Lowe, p.60; Stewart, p.61). The UGC was also "invited" to set up specialist sub-committees to exercise "general surveillance" over subject areas of national importance. (PRO,CAB 134/723 and ED 136/716; Lowe, p.60)

A measure which was intended not merely to increase numbers or boost special subject areas for reasons of manpower requirements or national strategic needs, but to change the social composition of the universities, was the removal of some of the financial barriers which made universities very inaccessible to the children of poorer, working class families. Further Education and Training Grants had been available for ex-service personnel since 1943. By 1950 some 85,000 such awards had been made, half of which were taken up at universities and many others used for degree-level work at technical and further education colleges. But these awards did nothing to broaden the social intake from secondary schools. Indeed, they tended to make access more restricted for school leavers, despite the expansion. University awards were highly competitive and many LEAs were grudging with their discretionary major awards. The Government could not force the LEAs to use their discretion more liberally but in May 1946 the Ministry of Education issued a circular strongly encouraging them to be more generous. (Lawson and Silver, pp. 419-20; Lowe, pp. 62-3; Ministry of Education [May 1946]; Vernon, pp. 215-6)

Ellen Wilkinson saw it as her Ministry's responsibility to ensure "that no boy or girl who is qualified for a University education should be deprived of it through lack of money". (PRO, ED 136/716) She made a similar commitment at the Labour Party Conference in 1946. (Hughes, p.159) She and her successor, George Tomlinson, did succeed in increasing the number of state scholarships and the amount of financial assistance for those winning scholarships to universities. By 1950 over 900 state scholarships were being awarded annually (treble the pre-war figure) and a further 10,000 new awards were being made by LEAs each year. About seventy-five per cent of students were by then in receipt of financial assistance from LEAs or other sources. (Hughes, p.158; Lowe, p.61; Pritt, p.233) Nevertheless, LEA awards were still not mandatory and students remained at the mercy of the vagaries of LEA policies and practice.

In July 1947 George Tomlinson activated a section of the 1944 Education Act to provide for the award of twenty state scholarships "for students of mature age". These scholarships were instituted "to provide opportunities for University Education to men and women over 25 years of age who were unable to undertake a University course at the normal age but whose aptitudes and qualifications subsequently appear likely to enable them to derive full benefit from a University course of study". (PRO, ED 46/472; Min. of Ed (1948)) Thus very cautiously began the special access arrangement for mature students. The scheme was renewed in 1948 and 1949. That autumn it was felt that "on the face of it there certainly seems to be a case for some increase" in the number of state scholarships for mature students because the quality was so good. In fact, thirty awards were made in 1950 (twenty-two men and eight women) in response to 162 eligible applications. A similar number was awarded in 1951. (PRO, ED 46/472)

What effect did these policies have? Firstly, as has already been indicated, it is clear that the Government never intended any fundamental change in the nature of university education or the relationship between the universities and the State. There was no wish to destroy the universities as "citidels of privilege". (Berdahl, p.170) They continued to stand apart from the rest of education and were allowed to retain very considerable autonomy, despite the increased powers of the UGC. (Gordon, Aldrich and Dean, p.237) "The universities went into the 1950s still able to restrict expansion and growth to their own pace". (Dean, p.107) The real expansion of the universities, after allowing for the post-1945 special provision for ex-service personnel, did not begin until the 1950s. (Lawson and Silver, p.430) Despite earmarked funding, their traditional curricula remained largely unchallenged and unchanged, at least until the establishment of the new university college at Keele in 1949. (Lowe, pp. 65-7) Nor did the Labour Government alter the social or gender composition of the universities in any significant way. As the Robbins Report later showed, the proportion of working class students remained stubbornly unaltered at around twenty-five per cent. (Lawson and Silver, p.430) The student body was still overwhelmingly drawn from the public schools and still predominantly male. It is hard to disagree with the view that "higher education, especially at the older universities, in general changed scarcely at all in the years of

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Labour Government, either in purpose or in character". (Morgan, p.179)

It is interesting to contrast these developments in higher education in the late 1940s with those in the late 1980s. The political culture of the Thatcher years was characterised by a fundamental commitment to meritocracy, market forces, consumer choice, rewards for industrious behaviour, enterprise and accountability. Inevitably this ideology clashed with Britain's traditionally elitist and protected higher education system, particularly the University sector. Moreover other social and economic forces also affected the political climate as Britain entered a major period of economic recession while at the same time experiencing a demographic decline and an aging population. Long term issues of racial, gender, class and regional disparity were aggravated by other social problems such as structural unemployment, rising drug addiction and increasing homelessness causing a period of social unrest and tension (Benn and Fieldhouse, pp. 73-80). These economic, social and political factors ensured that the Government felt a need to both control and change higher education and that wider access would be a central tenet of these changes. The New Right in the 1980s sought to incorporate the 'disadvantaged' within a property and share owning society. They sought to counter the social tensions by socialising more people into conformist tendencies and higher education was intended to play its part in this process. This was very clearly articulated in a speech by Robert Jackson, the junior government minister responsible for higher education, in which he referred to "the idea of the 'opportunity society' and the career open to talent" and higher education as " a means of social integration". He argued that "a society which is both stable and dynamic is one in which able people from every background know that they will not be denied access to institutions which are central both to the higher values of our civilisation and to the allocation of its material rewards". (Jackson, 1988)

This is social engineering at a distance, a technique much favoured by recent Conservative Governments. It is also an articulation of the use of education for social control by attempting to integrate into society those who might otherwise cause problems for society. It has been argued that from 1908 to the present day, university adult education has been seen by Governments and the Establishment as a means of socialising working class leaders and confining the thinking of a small but influential group of people within the parameters of an acceptable ideology. (Benn and Fieldhouse pp. 81-2). The enthusiasm for accessability fell within this historical stratagem. Important though it is, this social engineering was only a secondary cause of widening access. The first was manpower requirements. This can be seen clearly in the policies and thinking outlined in the 1987 White Paper, 'Higher Education: Meeting The Challenge'. The Government was very open in its intentions for higher education. Of the three "aims and purposes of higher education" (DES, 1987, p.iv), two concern the economy and only one concerns research and scholarship. Access is defined to mean "taking account of the country's need for highly qualified manpower". Indeed the Govenment states that a major determinant for the planning of higher education must be the demands for a highly qualified manpower and not student demand alone (DES,1987, p7). This thinking has not changed. The 1991 White Paper 'Higher Education: A New Framework' reafirms the aims and purposes of higher education and policies on access as set out in 1987 (DES, 1991a, p.7) and reinforces the manpower role by, for example, promising "continuous education from the age of 5 through education and throughout working life" (DES, 1991b, p.3).

Crucially, the White Paper very clearly outlines the Government's intention of implementing these aims and purposes by controlling higher education through enforcing greater accountability and by financial means (DES, 1987, pp.37-38) much as the Labour Government attempted to do in the 1940s. This intention continued. For example, the UFC's Chairman stated in 1989 that "funding will be adjusted to take account of the universities' performance in contributing to the Council's aims". (Chilver, 1989, p.6). Control has also been imposed by holding up the performance of the Polytechnics as an implicit threat (Jackson, 1989, p1). The ending of the binary divide and separate funding emphasises this aspect.

Accessibility also stems partly from the New Right ideology of consumer power. Consumer control through financial choice is being implemented through the loan system and greater consumer choice has been ensured by the radical approach of breaking down the elitist barriers to higher education (whilst perhaps keeping a small super fortress for the real elite).

Within this political context the 'success' of the wider access movement should come as no surprise and, by many measures, it has been successful. There has been a twenty per cent growth in higher education from 1985-1990 with a project-ed increase of fifty per cent by 2000 (DES, 1991, p.13). This is not just "more of the same" (Ball,1990). There have been radical changes to the very nature of higher education institutions. More mature students than young people now enter higher education each year (DES, 1991, p.8) and higher education institutions, including the universities, have become more accessible through Access courses, CATS, APL, APEL, modular degrees, fast-track two year courses and work related learning. Although many of these developments have led to a more flexible and accessible system, it is difficult not to believe that the underlying political culture was a stronger force in shaping these educational developments than were the needs of adult learners (or indeed any learners). To give just a few illustrations, an educational system designed to respond to adults' needs would not, as the loan system does, disadvantage the over-50s; would not indeed be premised on loans; would provide support for part-time study and would not threaten the basis of adult education as was originally outlined in the 1991 White Paper and carried over into the 1992 Education Act. Nevertheless without any doubt, there are increased opportunities for adults in today's higher education system.

Both in the 1940s and the 1980s, one of the prime motives for improving the access to higher education was to satisfy the perceived manpower needs of the country – to produce more scientists, technologists, managers, etc. and to improve the quality of the workforce. But whereas the expectation in the 1940s was that this would be achieved by an essentially unchanged university system, the recent Conservative Governments have been much more radical – aiming to change both the social composition of the student body and the very nature of the higher education system itself. It is true that the post-war Labour Governments did make some attempt to influence the nature of higher education through earmarked grants and UGC intervention, and to widen access by improving the financial support for students. But the measures were quite timid. The universities were changed very little in purpose or character. The recent Conservative Governments' reforms have been much more fundamental, partly because they follow on from the intervening Robbins reforms of the sixties and the creation of the polytechnics in the seventies, but also because the social unrest of the early eighties and the New Right ideology both gave an impetus to a much more radical shake-up of higher education – to make it an instrument of the meritocratic, opportunity, enterprise society, rather than a nagging source of opposition.

Similarly the recent Conservative Governments have been much more ruthless in siezing the means to impose these changes on the universities, compared with the more cautious attempts the Labour Government made in the 1940s.

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CHANGES IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION: THE 'OPEN LEARNING' CULTURE

THIS session will report on a current project which is exploring the ways in which ABE is changing and particularly the impact of specially funded open learning centres on the learning opportunities available to people.

We will set the scene by describing briefly the ways in which ABE has grown and changed over the last decade and a half. We will discuss how a philosophy of 'openness' has always been part of the best practice of ABE and ask how this tradition relates to current trends and buzzwords of 'open learning'.

We will suggest ways of exploring openness of structure and openness of process in learning both in established ABE provision and in the new open learning centres.

Finally, we will look at the broader context of funding and policy priorities that underlie these changes. We will examine how these are affecting students' learning experiences using material from our case studies.

We will aim for a workshop format, with illustrations from our interviews and other case study material and plenty of time for discussion.

Resourcers:
Sue Bergin
Mary Hamilton
Lancaster University

Wendy Moss
Chris O'Mahony
Goldsmiths College, London

A CULTURE OF CHANGE? PERSPECTIVES ON ADULT EDUCATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Mary Hamilton
Lancaster University

WORKPLACE general education initiatives are a relatively recent development, spreading fast in North America and beginning to take hold in the U.K. Such initiatives may signal changes in the culture of the workplace and in employer attitudes towards their manual workers. They certainly have implications for the culture of the colleges involved in developing such courses and negotiating with employers. These initiatives blur the distinctions between education, training and personal development, work and leisure.

A panel of people engaged in current research projects in this area will explore the general context of the development of workplace education initiatives and offer specific examples from their research.

Susan Hoddinott will introduce the international dimensions in workplace basic education. She will use her experience from North America and the U.K. to raise critical questions about the changes that are going on, possible causes and outcomes.

Fiona Frank will present data from three case studies of workplace education developed in private companies in the North West of England. The case studies include interviews with employers, educators, programme organizers, trade unionists and learners themselves.

John Payne will present the results of a questionnaire survey of employers in the U.K. which looks at their attitudes toward employee development and programmes they have implemented.

Mary Hamilton will lead a discussion which will centre on questions such as

> What is the relationship between adult education opportunities and job-related training?
>
> How is workforce literacy coming to be perceived as a problem? How are workplace education initiatives seen to contribute to the solution of this problem?
>
> What factors lead to the development of sucessful workplace education programmes?

What counts as "success" by the different parties involved and what motivates them to support such programmes?

Does the development of these initiatives signal some change in the culture of the workplace? If so, what is the push behind this change, and how do the different models on offer link in with the new culture of the workplace?

Do workplace adult education initiatives themselves promote change - either in individual lives or in the workplace?

How does workplace literacy relate to the privatisation of education? Will these programmes replace public provision?

The material on which this discussion will be based is very much "work in progress" since all three research projects are on-going. We expect our thinking to move on during the session and we will write up a paper afterwards which will incorporate these new insights and be circulated to all session participants.

Presenters:
Fiona Frank: Research Associate, Leverhulme funded project on Workplace Basic Education, Centre for the Study of Education and Training, Lancaster University.
Susan Hoddinott: Worker in ABE in Canada since 1980, currently on leave at Warwick University carrying out a comparative study of workplace literacy in the UK, Canada and North America.
John Payne: Research Fellow, UFC funded project on Adult Learners At Work, Department of Adult Continuing Education, University of Leeds.
Chair: Mary Hamilton, Senior Research Fellow, Literacy Research Group, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University.

CHANGES IN ADULT EDUCATION POLICY AND THE IMPACT ON 'CLIENT GROUPS', WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO GENDER

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Abstract

The starting point for the paper is the changing climate (politically, institutionally and culturally) for University Adult Education in Britain. A number of Government policy directives during the past decade, and responses to these by HE institutions, have led to changes in the range and type of courses on offer to mature students. The intended 'market' for University Adult Education has been the focus of much debate with issues such as access and vocational training becoming increasingly important.

IN our research we examine the impact of this changing climate on the nature of the student body attending University Adult Education, looking in particular at the effect on the sex ratio of students attending such courses. The paper reviews the literature in the area of gender and adult education, and draws on data from Exeter University (we are also in the process of comparing Exeter with Britol University) examining changes over time, to pose important questions about examining the groups University Adult Education is, should or could be aimed at.

Writing in the Harvard Educational Review, Kathleen Weiler points out that recent profound changes in Western epistemology and political theory are evident within education on the two crucial levels of practice and theory (Weiler 1991). In the first, formerly silenced groups challenge dominat approaches and knowledges, and in the second, the very notion of truth is scrutinsed and reworked. Certain educational ideals and aims, such as that of social justice, might remain the same as in earlier liberal theories (Friere is her specific example, not surprisingly), but the analyses and practices that might be instrumental in bringing them about are radically altered.

We are currently going through what has widely been assessed as some of the most far-reaching changes in education this century; as Malcolm Barry recently put it, Adult Education is undergoing both 'renaissance' and 'crisis' (Barry 1992). Most commentators who seek to assess the impact of the Further and Higher Education Act in the wake of the 1988 Education Reform Act emphasize the worry about vocationalism and see the situation as a more or less optimistic version of McIlroy's summary 'The national system of university liberal adult education and the extramural links, particularly that with the WEA, are in the melting pot. The best extramural departments, those who have stuck most with liberalism and the mission to the underpriveleged, will find themselves the least at home in the new environment.' (McIlroy 1989 342)

In this situation of flux, you might reasonably expect profound changes of the kind Kathleen Weiler describes as relevant to the British educational scene and its theorists. Though the epistemological land political changes she is writing about refer to the USA, and while the comparativist approach has its limitations, research in the Humanities in general in Britain evidence the kinds of shift she briefly indicates, and feminists in all fields will recognise them most readily.

This is where the picture becomes worrying. The debate at the levels of politics and Government policy and of the broadest reaching research and theory – even where that theory is in some respects progressive – remains relatively unaffected in fundamentals by the epistemological shifts of the past two decades or so. From this point of view, the reader is pitched into a kind of time-warp, into old-style liberal socialism, or into a space-warp, where the language of the free market and enterprise culture is grafted onto education principles with which it has little to do in fundamentals.

This scenario poses a problem in writing what is a necessarily brief survey of the literature, because it creates a disjunction between what in our view needs to be said, and the terms within which the debate is being conducted at different levels. Very little 'broad-sweep' research within adult edùcation is gender-aware on a deep level; and for the politicians, Tim Eggar, in a speech in June 1991 seems to think it enough to welcome ' the increase in participation of women among ma-

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*Based on current research carried out by the authors, funded by the Universities Funding Council.

ture students to 41%' without specifying further where or in what areas or types of course, and then to go on to generalize about 'community education' and 'breadth of provision'. This is an example symptomatic of an outmoded universalizing approach in which human subjectivity is unified and unproblematic, social groups are common-sensically supposed to have broadly compatible aims and aspirations, and writers make broad generalizations without elaborating on how the bases of their analysis is arrived at.

The exceptions to this tend to be smaller-scale and more specific studies (e.g. Hart 1991, Hughes 1991). Other important work is being done in relation to research methods) around participation, dropout qualitative research in relation to diverse populations (Blais, Duqiette & Panchaud 1989, Weil 1988, Merriam 1989, Garrison 1987).

A brief, avowedly preliminary attempt to look at some of the issues we are raising here was made by Sallie Westwood in her look at *Constructing the Other: Minorities, the State and Adult Education in Europe*. Westwood steps back to consider the premises underlying comparative adult education, and the same broad principles apply within the U.K. As she says, it is work that is 'essential if we are to develop a critical inquiry removed from the excesses of positivist social science. Once racism, minorities, ethnicities are foregrounded different trajectories . . . demand exploration.' (Westwood 1989: 150) She might well have added gender. One thing is clear: innovative grass-roots workers and researchers are not often speaking the same language as the policy-makers, and for important reasons. Our view is that this is a situation that could have grave consequences.

Before discussing these issues further we will turn briefly to a description of the project we are carrying out at Exeter University.

In an earlier pilot survey and investigation into the changes in the Department of Continuing and Adult Education at Exeter University over the 1980s – from 1983/4 to 1988/9 to be precise – changes in provision of courses, the role of staff and the client groups at Exeter University, Marianne Hester (1991) came to the following preliminary conclusions:

> first, course provision; actual provision of courses by the Exeter department has increased. This increase has been largely in the area of PICKUP/CET and Access courses, with a decrease in non-certificated 'general interest' extra-mural classes.
>
> second, the role of staff; academic staff have taken on a 'greater organizational, developmental and administrative role' (Hester 1991: 63), to the detriment of research and academic credibility. This tendency accords with McIlroy's view that the 'adult education intellectual' risks being turned into, or being replaced by, 'the administrator and the manager'.
>
> finally, client groups; these have shifted away from rural constituencies towards the urban, and towards business and professional groups, including mature students wanting entry to degree courses.

An interesting and important result was that an apparent stability in the gender balance of the client groups actually concealed important underlying features. Women's participation in the newer, vocational PICKUP/CET courses is around 22-3%, whereas their participation in Access is around the very large percentages between 77 and 82%. This continuing high participation from a traditionally disadvantaged group might well change for the worse as CET expands, unless that expansion is carefully guided and targeted.

The present project expands and developes this initial quantitative work in two main ways. First we have included a largely urban university adult education department, Bristol, together with Exeter, whose communities are a mixture of rural and city without a major conurbation, and include the large rural area of Cornwall. Second, we are updating the initial research and conducting a new survey among course participants in Exeter to complement existing quantitative data. This work is still in progress, and we are not yet at the stage of being able to make firm comment, though the indicators tend to bear out Hester's previous findings.

For the purposes of this very short paper, we can however focus on one specific and very recent example from Exeter, the gender balance on CET courses for 1990/91. Women's participation as a percentage of the overall FTE in the total DCAE client group on this course type is a high 67%, a dramatic increase over the previous year at 14%. So this would seem to indicate that women are well provided for. In fact it could indicate their vulnerability. The entire increase is due to one course, 'Professional Updating for Women'. Without it, the percentage remains roughly stable in relation to the previous year at 15% (14%). The concentration of provision for women in certain forms of course can make it seem that their position is more secure that it actually is, since the cessation of that course would occasion a drastic reduction. It also means that women who do not see this one course as the best for them are not being provided for by the rest of the courses on offer. This is not to criticize the provision of the course, since it clearly answers a pressing need. But it shows that what is taken to be the 'overall' provision is predominantly the *men's* provision, answering the requirements of very few women. That those women both exist and have requirements is clearly indicated by the success of courses like the Professional Updating, which is specifically designed and targeted. This is data that has not been collected or collated in this form elsewhere. We are only in the early stages, but it is already clear that there is much to be learned about who the client groups are in greater detail.

Issues around women and around specific client groups in university Adult Education also parallel wider educational concerns. Miriam David, for instance, has pointed out that the ERA, and the rhetoric of 'democracy' that surrounds it, are not in fct democratic in their effect, especially as regards women. By shifting major responsibilities onto parents – in the name of 'choice' – recent education reforms have not allowed 'for more democratic rights for women and adult/higher education' (David 1991: 433). Furthermore, she demonstrates that an elision between the interests of 'the family' and the interests of women does not facilitate understanding the real impact of the reforms. 'There is substantial evidence to suggest that women as mothers are now perforce more involved in educational decision-making at all levels – in making choices of school, in parental involvement, as "women parent-governors", as teachers, as mature women-students. Given the fact that over a quarter of all families are currently lone mother or single mother families, this must mean that women are shouldering a hugely increased set of responsibilities.' (David 1991: 444)

These arguments give something of an insight into a picture that affects everyone and into the broad issues of social democracy, equal opportunities and gender (let alone class and race struggles) in education. Madeleine Arnot points out that struggles over gender and race in education have been sidelined in the current debate and she demonstrates 'the tensions between equality and democracy as political goals within advanced capitalist societies', suggesting 'that not only liberal, but also the egalitarian approaches of the 1980s require critical re-evaluation.' (Arnott 1991: 447).

In conclusion, we feel that we need, within University Adult Education, to take a more critical look at the issues of difference, including theorising the changing positioning of men and women as students (or 'clients').

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THE CULTURE OF DIFFERENCE: WOMEN'S EDUCATION RE-EXAMINED

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THE purpose of this paper is primarily to raise questions and promote discussion about strategies for women's education in Britain. In this context I take 'women's education' to mean those forms of provision aimed specifically or mainly at women which have burgeoned over the last twenty years and which take place for the most part in FE colleges, community centres, voluntary organisations, training centres, and in the various manifestations of local authority provision for adults.

This 'new wave' of women's education is now no longer new – there can be few institutions left that do not have some form of women-only or women-centred course running at any given moment. The conventional wisdom in education seems to be that these courses are self-evidently a good thing, that they demand particular forms of curriculum, organisation and pedagogic practice, and that they serve women's interests in ways that 'mainstream' courses do not. This conventional wisdom has recently been summarised in a convenient form, complete with checklists, in a NIACE handbook[1].

Some serious attempts have been made in the past to provide a feminist critique of male-centred educational institutions, although comparatively little of this work has focussed on post-school education[2]. At the same time much energy has been put into the establishment of women-only courses, on the not unreasonable assumption that separate organisation was an essential first step in the evolution of a feminist praxis in education and, presumably, the transformation of education for the benefit of all women. This strategy borrowed to some extent from a wider tradition of adult education for social change, and was sometimes supported by the equal opportunities policies being developed in local authorities.

Unfortunately the period of rapid growth of interest in education for women coincided with a period in which education funding was ruthlessly cut and alternative funding methods, usually based on competitive grants for specific types of course, became more and more common. The experimental and 'pilot' nature of many women's courses lent itself to this form of funding (even if they had to be moulded somewhat to fit the ever-changing criteria), and these grants often provided much-needed support for childcare, transport costs, etc. As a result, during the 1980s there was a positive epidemic of first-step/springboard/introductory/"women into" courses, some attempting to launch women into non-traditional vocational areas, but most providing either a route into areas of study or work where women were already well-established, or explicit and feminist-inspired 'education for its own sake'. Tutors, fees, locations, facilities, admissions procedures, curricula and forms of assessment often differed from those on 'mainstream' courses, and the reliance on short-term funding meant that (women) staff were frequently employed on temporary or part-time contracts. A further disadvantage of this type of funding is demonstrated by the fact that many women's education initiatives have sunk without trace when institutions have failed to absorb them into their basic programmes.

The lack of systematic research in the area of women's education makes it impossible to say with any certainty what effect these activities have had on women's lives. Women's education continues to be seen, or even promoted, as a 'special' form of provision; it is not at all clear how, if at all, it has changed the general work of educational institutions. Women's desire to carve out their own niche for themselves and their insistence on difference may initially have been seen as threatening, but many institutions seem to have become quite comfortable with the idea. Why, indeed, should they argue? The threat of a challenge to the prevailing academic culture has been siphoned off into a marginal area of activity, leaving the culture largely intact. As an added bonus institutions have been able to use their women-only courses as evidence of a deep commitment to 'equal opportunities', in much the same way as commitment to numerous other worthy causes can be demonstrated by wearing an appropriate T-shirt. It is perhaps worth noting at this point that the growth in women's education has not notably improved the career prospects of women staff; work on such courses, whilst undoubtedly congenial, is notoriously insecure and lacking in status.

Women are still concentrated in traditional areas of study, and in areas and grades of employment which are often part-time, low-paid, and low status, with little prospect of career development[3]. There is little evidence of what impact women's education has had on this situation; indeed the destinies of the thousands of women who have undertaken courses for women over recent years remain largely a matter of speculation. My impression is that a relatively small proportion of women embarking on courses in non-traditional vocational subjects finally succeed in qualifying and obtaining employment in their chosen area. Moving from the supportive environment of the women-only course into the 'mainstream' (which is usually necessary in order to progress, qualify or specialise) may be a very difficult experience for some women, particularly if the move involves enrolling on a 'male' course with no practical support. This may help to account for those women who, despite positive views of their experience on women's courses, disappear, perhaps for the second and last time, from education. How many times, after all, can one make a fresh start? Even where women form a substantial number of students on 'mainstream' courses, they may find themselves pigeonholed in occupational terms, or clearly marked as deviants from the student norm[4]. It should perhaps not be surprising if institutions, constantly reminded that women are different from ordinary students, continue to organise themselves on the assumption that ordinary students are not women. The strategy of claiming that women require different *courses* has serious implications for the majority of women students, since it poses no challenge to existing practices on 'mainstream' courses. Indeed, were these practices to change significantly, much of the conventional rationale for women's courses might disappear.

This raises the question of where women's courses fit into the structure and practice of academic institutions: are they seen as an integral and fully-fledged part of educational provision, or as remedial work for students who cannot stand the pace on 'mainstream' courses? There is little information available on how such courses are viewed either by admissions tutors or by employers, and whether they actually assist women's progress on their chosen route or mark them forever as 'non-standard' (which may be doubly disabling for students already considered non-standard in other respects). It is anomalous that there is far more information available on the longer-term effects of what the Government chooses to define as 'training' for women[5] than on more broadly-defined women's education. The Employment Department is about to repeat the 1980 *Women and Employment Survey*[6], including men on this occasion to provide a comparative study, but educational experience will be excluded from the survey unless the DFE is prepared to support the research. This information is urgently needed in order to clarify how women's education benefits, disadvantages, or otherwise affects different groups of women.

There are a number of pressing reasons for suggesting that research in continuing education needs to focus more clearly on the dynamics of the educational process for women, the purpose of women-only courses, the benefits of different approaches and the exploration of alternatives. One of the most urgent reasons is the recent passage of the Further and Higher Education Act, which will effectively unleash FE into the marketplace without any form of democratic control. Inequalities of gender, race and class are most unlikely to be issues for the FEFC, and the loss of local authority influence will leave many institutions free to abandon their existing commitment to this kind of social change (however ill-thought-out or hamfisted this may have been). Restructuring and pruning of provision were being eagerly undertaken by colleges even before the Act was passed, and many local authorities are offloading staff and resources with indecent haste in preparation for running or leasing out small, expensive and market-led programmes of 'leisure classes'.

Unless courses for women fit the limited funding criteria of the new FEFC, they will not be funded; those that are funded will have to demonstrate regularly that they achieve their aims, which must accord with those approved by the Government appointees and employers making the decisions. Colleges will not be in a good position to argue for the maintenance of provision without clear evidence of its benefits. The recent history of TECs suggests that even where there is an espoused commitment to supporting particular groups (in this case, single parents and women returners on Employment Training), this is likely to be dropped as soon as the suspicion arises that increased costs are hindering the fulfilment of other priorities, or that the requisite level of 'value-added' is not being adequately demonstrated. Institutions under pressure to streamline their provision and concentrate on politically popular and 'successful' courses, and no longer required to parade their equal opportunities credentials, may not need to look far to find small, expensive and marginal pockets of work to trim.

Outside the FEFC sector, courses will have to pay for themselves; this may have little effect on therapy-oriented personal development courses for white professional women, but many other forms of women's education could not survive on this basis. The EC will doubtless continue to provide funding for some forms of women's (vocational) education but as now, the political priorities which determine funding criteria may change unexpectedly and in unpalatable directions, and the familiar difficulties of short-term funding and criterion-bending will remain.

The advent of 'quality assurance' in educational institutions, and the concomitant demand for tangible and quantifiable information about the aims and outcomes of educational provision, has thrown into sharp and uncomfortable relief the lack of a theoretical basis for much continuing education work. This is especially problematic for those areas, such as ABE and women's education, where the claimed outcomes are often intangible and may not produce any immediately visible changes in students' lives. It is particularly unfortunate that those who have for the last few years borne the brunt of this onslaught - CE workers outside Universities – are also those with the least opportunity to pursue research. The FEU's enthusiasm and diligence in instructing educators in the correct implementation of Government initiatives may have much to answer for; however this approach has scarcely been challenged on a theoretical level by CE researchers in higher education. The reasons for this are unclear, but may not be unrelated to a perception that the bulk of education for adults in Britain has little to do with, or at least is not as interesting as, continuing education as understood in (provided by?) Universities.

It is not clear from the evidence available what has or has not been achieved by recent initiatives in women's education, except perhaps that institutions have not been transformed by them. Information is often gathered from individual courses and is sometimes published; accounts of this kind tend to rely heavily on anonymous quotations from delighted students and descriptions of course organisation and content, but are almost invariably concerned with a small number of students, rarely follow them up beyond the first port of call after the course, and do not usually attempt to locate the work within any kind of theoretical context. Information of this kind is of course valuable but, since it is highly selective and subjective, needs to be gathered more extensively and systematically in order to provide a wider picture of what exactly is being attempted in women's education, and how far it achieves its own (or other) ends. This process would doubtless reveal a multitude of different purposes, methods and approaches being employed in the field, and raise questions about implicit political perspectives. This in turn might provide an opportunity to re-forge the relationship between the practice of women's education and developments in feminist theory and other relevant areas of thought. This connection seems to have atrophied somewhat over the years, except perhaps within the discipline of Women's Studies, which is largely confined to HE. Hayes' recent study[7] of the impact of feminism on adult education journals, although limited in its scope, demonstrates that gender issues remain very much a minority interest in the field. One suspects that a similar survey of references to race, ethnicity and associated theory would yield similar results. Absences of this kind in the body of CE research and discussion must cast considerable doubt on the extent to which practice in women's education (and other forms of CE) is informed by or itself informs theory.

The present vulnerable state of much women's education may be a direct consequence of blind faith in the overriding importance of women-only provision *outside* mainstream education, and the consequent absorption of practitioners in its day-to-day organisation. *If* there is a good case for women-only educational provision as a means of promoting real equality for women and long-term change in education, then women-only courses and options need to become a normal and integral element of all 'mainstream' provision. If, on the other hand, women-only courses can only function as a first step into education for particular groups of women, then serious attention needs to be given to the thousands of women students on 'mainstream' courses who do not benefit from the facilities, approaches and support considered so essential on 'women's' courses. If these approaches are indeed beneficial to women's learning, the majority of women students will only profit from them when they become part of normal educational practice for all students.

It is impossible at present to formulate coherent strategies for the future in women's education. It is not clear what is being attempted; the lessons from experience are not available in any usable form; the lack of a theoretical basis for practice has given rise to a multitude of piecemeal, haphazard and pragmatic approaches. This is perhaps the worst possible moment to embark upon a period of reflection, at a time when the provision which does exist is threatened by the current upheavals in the organisation of CE and the prospect of several more years of a Government *hostile to any but the most unthreatening of* feminist ideas. However this reflection is essential if women's education is to survive to make a real contribution to *changing* education for the benefit of women, rather than withering into an inexplicable historical curiosity.

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ADULT LEARNING AND CULTURAL CHANGE IN AN M.ED COURSE: THE CASE OF THE EXAMINERS

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Abstract

THE relationship between adult learning and cultural change is examined in the context of an M.Ed. course in Education and the Mass Media. First the course and its relationship with cultural change is described. Then the learning of the examiners, internal and external, is explored by means of the critical incident technique. This technique has subjects tell stories, to give accounts of their most significant experiences during a period. The accounts are given and followed by reflections on their contents. They reveal the doubts and difficulties in "examining". The self-examination which is intrinsic in adult learning leads to controversies which themselves contribute to cultural change.

Introduction

OUR intention is to focus on the process of assessment and examination — something in which all of us in higher education are involved in some way, but which is rarely researched or written about. We draw upon our experience of working together in the context of the examination of students on an M.Ed. programme in Education and the Mass Media at the University of Manchester School of Education. Nod is the course director, having devised and launched the course in 1985; Colin has been external examiner for the course since 1988. The concern here is primarily with our own learning, rather than that of the students.

Background: Structure and Philosophy of the Course

The course combines the theoretical study of mass communication (drawing on the perspectives of sociologists, political economists, psychologists and media professionals) with practical work in media production. It also features explorations in interpersonal communication, undertaken through seminars and experiential groups.

Strong emphasis is placed on the importance of group work. An important element of course modules dealing with media institutions and processes is the formation of interest groups where students focus on shared concerns with, for example, new communications technology, gender and the media, or the relationship between mass media and development. Work in progress is reported back to the whole course group.

For two modules which aim to develop skills in the use of audio-visual techniques for educational purposes, students are required to work in groups to produce tape-slide and video projects. A group diary, recording, for example, how group decisions were reached, how the group managed its division of labour and how group members felt about each other at various stages of the project, is submitted as part of the assessed work. The work is assessed collectively.

Early in the modules on interpersonal communication, the students are introduced to the model of learning represented in the experiential learning cycle, with its four stages of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract generalisation and active experimentation (see Kolb, 1984). Course members form reference groups (self-chosen groups based upon shared identities or orientations) and the task of these groups is to reflect upon and review course experience. Each student is asked to record individual reflections in a journal kept throughout the course - although this journal is a private document, outside the assessed work required on the course.

Each year since 1989 Colin has made a mid-year visit, participated in course meetings and led a workshop on *Qualities of a Dissertation*.

Relationship to the Conference Theme

The relationship to the theme of this conference is severalfold. The course with which we are dealing is concerned with culture in terms of content and process. The study of the mass media is inevitably bound up with the analysis of cultural production and cultural change. On this course, the participants are extremely diverse in terms of culture; typically, the course group is mixed by gender, race, nationality, occupational background, age and religion. Nineteen different nationalities were represented on the 1991-92 course. Students are encouraged to draw upon and discuss their personal and professional experience in the course meetings and in the written work they produce for assessment.

The course involves, to a large extent, a negotiated curriculum, and although the course content varies a good deal from year to year, a topic of considerable concern to many students is that of cross-cultural communication.

It is possible to identify at least three levels of cultural change:

- the personal and interpersonal (i.e. in self-concepts and face to face relations).
- the institutional (i.e. in courses, departments and institutions of higher education).
- the environmental (i.e. in regional, national and international attitudes, norms and values).

It will be apparent in our accounts of important incidents in the last four years that our approach of focusing upon our own learning has had the effect of highlighting the personal and institutional.

The Critical Incident Approach

In 1955, Flanagan devised a simple but indirect approach to the understanding of complex experiences. By asking subjects what was their "worst" or "best" moment in a given period, he accessed their "turning points" (moments of decisiveness and changes in direction) and "learning points" (never-to-be-forgotten moments which taught the person something significant).

The critical incident technique has been refined in many ways and related to many roles and situations (Fivars, 1980). We chose three prompts for this exercise:

- moment of greatest surprise (being shocked by the unexpected);

- moment of greatest concern (being under real role stress);

- moment of greatest compassion (being under real pressure as a person).

[We would like to devote part of this conference session to exchanges between pairs of participants who will listen to each others' accounts of examining experiences, internal or external, prompted by these three phrases. It will take a few minutes of concentrated thought, a willingness to listen and to defer discussion, and explicit mutual trust. We shall not ask participants to make their accounts public; rather we shall proceed directly to our own accounts and then to a consideration of what they might mean.]

The External's Accounts

Moment of Greatest Surprise

1. I second-marked two outstanding papers. One was encyclopaedic and elegant. The other was argumentative and vigorous. I then attended a seminar with the strong sounds of the writers' thoughts in my mind. As the seminar ended I remembered that I had not looked out for these two exemplary scholars. I asked for them to be identified. They had been quiet, modest and "ordinary" throughout the session. If I had relied on public performance, I would have been inclined to overlook their skills as expressed on paper.

2. The students' tape-slide productions seem to obey an inverse law: the more aesthetic the title, the more laboured and lost the production; the more practical the subject, the more lively the presentation. A simple idea has the possibilities of development. A complex idea has the problems of demonstration.

Moments of Greatest Concern

1. A dissertation began with great promise, then retreated to repetition, avoided the issues and was consistently conceited. What had gone wrong? Was the student thinking I would not notice recycling? Did the supervisor think this was at least an acceptable minimum? Had I missed something really significant? Here was a borderline fail written with remarkably good cheer. What was to be done next?

2. A blind student sat attentively in the group to which I was speaking about qualities of a thesis. But I rely on diagrams, on imagery and upon pointing things out. Eventually I moved alongside him and spoke, conversationally, without gestures or show. If I could do that with and for him why should my performance be so different with a sighted audience?

Moments of Greatest Compassion

1. It was a dissertation on women and empowerment in Eire. The expressions of anger, hope,

insistence and imagination were exquisitely balanced.

The text was flawless and flowed into every crevice of the questions which were forming in my mind. Here was personal and professional growth beyond the possibilities which the writer's home circumstances were going to offer. This, too, she recognised — without bitterness — in the conclusion.

2. The tutors were tired, really tired. The room was shabby, almost sordid. The furniture was hard and uncomfortable and the heating had gone off. There were far too many students for there to be an easy and engaging exchange.

Yet the conversation crackled with good humour and there was the warmth of learning together. But how could there be a fair examination with the odds so stacked against achievement?

The Internal's Accounts

Moments of Greatest Surprise

1. As a result of his interest in interpersonal communication having been aroused by the M.Ed. course, an Ethiopian student decided to change his dissertation topic from an evaluation of his work as a television producer (a safe option) to a participant-observational study of the group dynamics in the hall of residence where he was living (a much riskier choice). I encouraged the change, but found the process of supervision extremely hard work; the student seemed to find it almost impossible to relate his observations to the theoretical work he was reading, and the work progressed at a snail's pace. But when the final draft was completed and the dissertation submitted for examination, I found that it was original, insightful and, in parts, moving.

2. In the course of Colin's most recent annual visit, a discussion arose over whether a major change should be made to the organisation and assessment of one part of the course. I was startled to realise how important discussion with the external examiner had become in providing a shared construction of reality to frame my understanding of the course. In the past I had tended to regard the examining process as constituting a necessary evil, rather than as a useful contribution to course development.

Moments of Greatest Concern

1. At the stage of the course when tape-slide projects were being submitted, it emerged that a member of one of the groups had returned home to Turkey a week before the end of the course. Discussions with remaining members of the group revealed that the student in question had made numerous undertakings to his colleagues on the course which had not been fulfilled; they, however, argued that that he had been present for most of the work.

Other staff concerned with the course argued that this student should be failed on the module. I felt that such a stance was justified, but, on the other hand, I had established a firm principle that group work should be assessed collectively, and that group members should take responsibility for one anothers' contributions to the group task. I was uneasy about the prospect of deviating from this principle. (In the end, the student was failed.)

2. An essay submitted for examination for a module in interpersonal communication dealt with the topic of leadership in groups, and drew heavily on the writer's experience of class meetings. She produced a lively and amusing account of interaction amongst course members. *My* behaviour was characterised as autocratic and unreasonable (for example, in my insistence on the importance of maintaining tight time boundaries). Doubts were planted. Could there be something in what she wrote?

Moments of Greatest Compassion

1. A student's essay described her emotions during her first week on the course, just after she arrived in England from Guyana. She had been awe-struck at being in the University of Manchester, terrified of failure, and frightened into near speechlessness by her tutor (me). The essay emphasised how much the writer had grown in confidence and self-esteem during the course, but I was struck by the vivid account of her early experience on the course. Why is being an adult student so often so uncomfortable?

2. A student's dissertation contained a page of acknowledgements to tutors, family and friends. Embedded in the routine thanks were references to children left behind in the care of grandparents, to the everyday dangers of life back home in strife-torn Namibia, and to two friends who had been killed there in recent months. I was lost in admiration at the student's ability to turn out lucid prose under such circumstances.

Reflections on the Accounts

The External's Accounts

One theme is the concern for the significance of performance, for "show" personally and interpersonally, be it on paper, in a group or in front of a group. How far is the character being examined as distinct from the competence?

The second theme is a critical relation to the curriculum — the tape-slide production and the dissertation topic choice. Is there also an advocacy from the students' perspective?

The third theme is the concern for deteriorating circumstances. Is it right to make allowances, or is this condoning worsening institutional change?

The Internal's Accounts

One theme thrown up in my accounts is the tension between my belief that the approach to teaching and learning which I use on the course is an appropriate and effective one, and my anxiety that it *won't work*.

Some of this tension arises out of discussions with a colleague with whom I share responsibility for some modules of the course; while we share some aspects of a common philosophy of adult education, there are significant differences. She tends to favour group activities which are more tightly organised than the slightly chaotic meetings with minimal structure which characterise my teaching method. She expresses concern about my use of experiments which she fears may be traumatic for students, and may stir up conflict. I struggle to understand the impact that the dynamic of the staff group (and of course I regard the external examiner as a member of that group) has both on my attitudes and on the operation of the course.

A second theme relates to my intermittent worry about the way I handle the leadership role, and about the possibility that my belief that I have a clear and accurate perception of the way groups in which I participate work may not be quite so well-founded as I think it is.

A third theme relates to my increased reliance on the external examiner as a sounding board for ideas about course development. The reason why my relationship with the external examiner has taken on an enhanced significance is that reorganisation in the University of Manchester Faculty of Education has led to a reduction of opportunities for academic staff to discuss their courses collectively. For example, module tutors now arrange their assessment procedures individually, with no requirement for assignments, essay topics or dissertation titles to be approved by meetings of internal examiners. Many of us work in increasing isolation from colleagues in the same building, and I value the opportunity to discuss my doubts and difficulties, as well as my good ideas, with an outside authority who has some detailed knowledge of my teaching.

The Alignment of Accounts

Both examiners expressed strong, even central, self-doubts. Both identified practical or pragmatic concerns for the course content. And both are concerned about the reduced opportunities for consideration of the latter.

One of our shared concerns in the course of acting together as examiners, and in writing this paper, has been with understanding the changes which have taken place in the institutional framework within which the course operates.

Significant changes over the last five years have included: modularisation of M.Ed. courses, leading to an increase in the size of groups on the modules of the media course; an increase in the volume of assessed work; more explicit criteria used in assessment and examination; reduced payments for examining.

However, our concern is less with the deteriorating environment and its relationship with quality of educational experience and standards of examination achievement than with adult learning and cultural change.

The central point which flows from our analysis is that formation and transformation at the individual level depend upon self-doubt, self-criticism and the raising of some very substantial questions.

The transition then to the institutional level is fraught, to say the least. However, for there to be cultural change which moves from the individual level of examiner to the institutional level of examination it has to be accepted that there are controversies. As Marge Whalley succinctly puts it, "when a situation of controversy comes up, we can confront it, we can go away from it, we can go round it or we can negotiate". (Santos, 1992). We tend to favour confrontation or negotiation.

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ADULT EDUCATION AND THE CHANGING RESEARCH CONTEXT*

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Abstract

THE relationship of adult education to its changing cultural contexts, as mediated by the changing cultural context of adult education research, is neither obvious nor unproblematic. I will examine aspects of the changing cultural context of adult education research as they have borne upon the writing of this paper. I shall locate the cultural study of adult education within the wider debate about the nature of adult education research in changing cultural contexts. I will conclude that adult education research is characterised by distorted communication which is, in part, culturally determined and which will, if not resolved threaten the future of adult education (and adult education research) impoverishing the communities it serves as it does so. Proper attention to the changing cultural contexts of adult education must, therefore, include those of adult education research itself if these issues are to be resolved with the speed their urgency necessitates.

Adult Education and Changing Cultures

FOR the last eight years I have carried out research in a combination of formal and informal, statutory and voluntary, Further, Higher and Adult educational contexts. I am currently working on the two year funded research project 'Evaluating Rural Adult Learning' (ERAL) for the Department of Adult Continuing Education of the University of Leeds. Until I started work on the ERAL project I had always taken a culturalist perspective on adult education research. I intended, therefore, in this paper to describe some of this culturally focused research, in a fairly low key and discursive way, inviting comment, especially about its underlying theory and methodology, from the adult education research community.

When the letter came telling me that the paper had been accepted for the SCUTREA conference, however, it contained a list of criteria upon which those selecting papers for inclusion in it had agreed each paper should meet. With regard to my paper the relevant criteria seemed to be:

(1) that the paper should be closely tied to the conference theme, 'the changing context of adult education'.

(2) that it should include material on adult education organisations other than, as well as, Higher education ones and

(3) that it should be 'intelligible'.

A re-write, or at least a major re-think, of the paper was called for.

To meet all these criteria inside a 2,000 word budget when presenting the results of a cultural study is not as feasible as talking, in general terms, about the methodological issues involved in that study. I abandoned my original intentions and began to focus my attention on what this state of affairs might tell us about the relationship of adult education to culturally focused research. The problem of the relationship of culturalist perspectives on, and to, adult education research can be seen at the level of research method and practice. It is ineluctably linked to the ways in which research per se on, and in, adult education is understood within the fields of adult education theory and practice.

The problematical relationship of culturalist perspectives on adult education and adult education research relates, moreover, to the problems of adult education in changing research contexts. At its heart a paradox. Culturalist research is characterised by its commitment to the study of 'other cultures'. It is difficult to imagine the circumstances under which the culturalist researcher could ever be anything other than some kind of

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* Note: This paper does not reflect the views of the ERAL project directors, the Department of Adult and Continuing Education (DACE) of the University of Leeds or, indeed, the University of Leeds. It draws heavily on work carried out for a PhD at the University of Durham as well as upon reflections upon my current role as researcher in the Leeds University DACE. In doing so it does not reflect the views of the University of Durham, in particular, those of its sociology department.

'outsider' to the behaviour s/he is studying. On the other hand the relationship of adult education theory, research and practice to each other, within the field of adult education practice is, Usher and Bryant have argued, indeterminate:

> 'The elements of practice, theory and research will always be there, and will always be in some relationship to one another. The important thing is not to privilege any one element by treating it as foundational' (1989:5).

The conceptually isolated elements of adult education theory, practice and research do, however, form a 'triangle', which is both fairly representative of the 'insider' world of adult education research and 'captive'. A triangle from within which the adult education researcher 'can never entirely escape'.

Bryant and Usher assume what has (until fairly recently when its financial and organisational context began to change) usually been the case that, adult education theory, research and practice are all carried out 'in-house', from within 'the captive triangle' by persons who, because caught in it, are best understood as 'reflective practitioners'. I have always had difficulty with the term 'reflective practitioner' not least because of its obvious relativity and therefore vulnerability to exploitation by the overly theory or practice oriented individual within adult education. What is the nature of the tension between 'reflection' and 'practice' in adult education? How, in praxis, is a weighting, differential or equal, given to either 'reflection' or 'practice', as analytically understood, without falling back on a situational ethics, which is rarely documented in the literature of adult education.

The notion of 'the reflective practitioner' held 'captive' within the semi-Bermudan 'triangle' of adult education theory, research and practice worries me even more. Not because it makes those caught in the triangle disappear but because it loses sight of those outside, or on the periphery of it. The 'captive triangle' model of adult education research does not match the reality of adult education research in the changing research contexts of the 1990's. A context increasingly characterised by the employment of contract research specialists who are not, and probably never have been, involved in the practice of adult education. These researchers often work on research projects managed by practicing adult educators whose research experience is confined to that of their subject specialisms. Are these researchers, because one leg short of a triangle, able to do adequate adult education research? Are the practicing adult educators because two legs short of the triangle able to evaluate research as adequate or otherwise? How are we to theorise the changing cultural context of adult education research?

In short, my research into adult education and its research has led me to question the notion of the 'reflective practitioner' as theory and practice in the context of adult education research. My suspicions about the veracity of 'the reflective practitioner' grow in the context of culturally focused adult education research. Where adult education has generated high quality culturally focused research it has done under conditions in which, the 'reflective practitioner' has been more marginal (somewhat of an 'outsider') to 'the captive triangle' than might have, at the time, been comfortable for him/her and, indeed, for adult education.

It seems to me that the problems between adult education and culturally focused research are as real, and potentially as serious and intractable as those (alluded to by David Jones and Mark Dale in their respective summaries of recent joint talks between ESRC and representatives from adult education in the March issue of *Scoop)* between adult education and mainstream social and educational research per se. Given the 'insider' stance of 'the captive triangle' and the 'outsider' status of culturally focused research overlain by the importance of subject specialist research in adult education the capacity for distorted communciation and its resultant 'unintelligibility' to sections of the adult education research community is large and growing.

The conference organisers are right, therefore, to stress that participants endeavour to make their contributions 'intelligible' to each other and the conference. These are not matters of literary aesthetics, or of the time-table imperatives constraining conference organisers. Neither are they the rabid anti-jargonistic ramblings which sociological contributions in inter-disciplinary contexts too often (and unfairly in recent years) attract. They are a representation of the kinds of practical problems any cultural form encounters in changing contexts and I understand adult education, and its research, to be cultural forms in curious articulation with each other and with mainstream social and educational research. To stress a need for 'intelligibility is not, however, to show how it might be achieved. Being 'intelligible' across the whole field of adult education research is, then, probably easier said than done. There are real, practical, conceptual and linguistic problems involved which if not brought out into the open, acknowledged and resolved in a spirit of mutual co-operation and enquiry will, because of the kind of prejudices born of fear of the unknown (changing contexts) they engender, threaten the future of adult education research and ultimately of adult education. Any threat to adult education is, in my view, a threatened impoverishment of the communities it serves and ultimately the quality of the cultural fabric of our society at a time when that society is undergoing major changes including, for perhaps the first time in its history an unparallelled awareness of the uncertainty of the outcome of those changes. All of us involved in adult education research, whether inside 'the captive triangle' or outside of it need to subject our research practices to public, as well as private, scrutiny if we are to be able to understand each other's ways of working and the demands they place upon the researcher and the researched. Especially if we hope to build the kind of genuine, self-reflexive adult education research community within which we can develop a communality of methods out of the best of individual and institutional practice. Those within the 'captive triangle' need, therefore, to become aware of, and sympathetic towards, the many different ways in which adult education research is now being done. Those outside of the triangle, but doing research in and about adult education, need to make explicit the ways in which their marginal position both enhances and contrains their work.

So far I have discussed these issues in the abstract and with regard to culturally focused research carried out by me before I joined the University of Leeds to work on the ERAL project. I have shown how I had to re-work this paper in the light of my inability to render a thickly descriptive account of the articulation of different and educational cultural forms within 2,000 words. The ERAL research is not culturally focused. This does not mean, however, that the concepts of culture or 'intelligibility' are irrelevant to it. Using methods taken from within adult education and sociology, the ERAL research aimed to audit adult learning activities, in formal and informal contexts, (in parts of rural England), within the context of an evaluative framework. The sheer range and variety of this type of activity, even when limited as for our purposes here, to Higher Educational Liberal Adult Education, points to real issues of 'intelligibility' and its converse in the daily practice of empirically grounded research. I will conclude this paper with just one example taken from this research. In the last few months I have frequently found myself, late at night, sitting in a vehicle, parked outside a deserted school or village hall, or in a lay-by, trying desperately to jot down in a notebook the terminology and therefore to recall, in part, the content of a lecture, class or session I had just observed. The stress within university adult education on 'university standards' and the sheer amount of ground to be covered by the ERAL research, (allied to the important role played, in this type of adult education, by subject specialist research) meant I frequently had only one chance to observe a class, talk etc and, therefore, to make sense of it in its 'own' as well as my terms. I had particular trouble with vernacular architecture, mediaeval history and astronomy: trouble with the latter which Stephen Hawking's 'Brief History of Time' and numerous guides for idiots reading it could not get me out of. I will probably always be grateful that, at the time I carried out the ERAL research, 'New Testament Greek' was not part of the Department's rural programme.

The problems of understanding what one is seeing and hearing in research contexts is common to all observational research. The nature and sheer variety of university liberal adult education exacerbates this problem because it presents it largely as a matter of pedagogy, and of curriculum content:

> 'If a pedagogical assumption is realistic for a particular learner in regard to a particular learning goal, then a pedagogical strategy is appropriate ... For example, when learners are indeed dependent (such as when entering into a totally strange content area), when they have in fact had no previous experience with a content area, when they do not understand the relevance of a content area to their life tasks or problems, when they need to accumulate a given body of subject matter in order to accomplish a required performance, and when they feel no internal need to learn that content, then they need to be taught by the pedagogical model. (If I were to enrol tomorrow in a course in nuclear physics, I would need to have a didactic instructor teach me what the content is, how it is organised, what its special terminology is, and what 'the resources are for learning about it before I

> would be able to start taking the initiative in learning more about it' (Knowles M, 1984:62).

I prefer to understand adult education, and the contexts it is carried out in, as cultural forms, rather than as backcloths against which to situate subject/discipline specific knowledge. These adult educations, and their cultural contexts, are complex and ever changing. There is no single, unified adult education, or adult education research, the relationship of which to context, cultural or otherwise, can be easily determined or read off. There is, therefore, no single and universal way for adult educators and adult education researchers to be 'intelligible' to each other and the wider research community. The rendering of adult education research 'intelligible' across and within the whole field of its activities calls for hard and sustained work carried out in a spirit of co-operation and mutual enquiry. We could start by dismantling the theoretical scaffolding of the 'insider' and 'outsider' dichotomy as exemplified in the concept of 'the reflective practitioner'.

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LESSONS IN CITIZENSHIP: UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION AND MODERNITY

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ADULT education was one of the great causes of the nineteenth century. The university extension movement which began in Britain in the 1870s began as an attempt by socially aware lecturers from Cambridge and Oxford Universities to extend some of the benefits of university education to adults who would not otherwise have passed through the doors. In important ways it signalled the beginning in Britain of the meeting together of intellectuals and 'the common people' that was to be so fundamental in the creation of a new polity, the democratic welfare state. It was here, I argue, that many of the initial discussions about rights and duties, the distribution of wealth and opportunity and the realm of the 'personal' took place between progressive intellectuals, socially active women and politically conscious workers. University adult education created a forum where the burning issues of political modernisation could be aired in a tolerant and informed atmosphere perhaps unrivalled in any other sphere of civil life. This is not to say that it was completely open and free from ideological taint, but because of the adult education class's relative distance from the as yet underdeveloped monitoring system of the political state, the 'controversial' subjects could be confidently approached. This was the educational area par excellence for discussing the scientific subversion of religious 'truths', the rights of the citizen and the duties of the state, the emancipation and professionalisation of women and with the extraordinary development of literary studies, the notion of 'Englishness' itself. Here the 'ordinary' man and woman of intellectual curiosity could, for the first time meet with university intellectuals on a regular and sustained basis.

One of the reasons that this optimistic perspective on the origins of the movement has been met with scepticism is that often and probably quite unconsciously, the adult education movement assumed the language of that other great movement of the nineteenth century, colonialism. Extension was often seen as a 'mission' of enlightenment to the dark places of Britain especially the industrial north where the warring hill tribes of the West Riding, for example, might be shown that rational and scientific thought was far better for understanding the world and solving social problems than their traditional irrational and superstitious practices, which included machine-wrecking, strikes and violent demonstrations. The Arnoldian fear of the mob no doubt underlay some of the intellectuals' activities which gave rise to this kind of view.

The target of much university extension was the 'working man' who, it was hoped, could be turned away from class antagonism toward social harmony and reconciliation. In Britain it could be argued this was remarkably successful, for despite the spontaneous growth of the militant socialist movement in the 1880s, paralleling the adult education movement, within a decade its revolutionary sting had been pulled and the British organised working class was opting for Labourism and parliamentary democracy (alongside Tory populism and a mercurial syndicalism). In Europe a keen interest was taken in British university extension, because it appeared to delivering the goods of class reconciliation, and in the 1890s 'university extension' blossomed in every country from Belgian to the Balkans. In France the movement for social reconciliation developed into a fully-fledged political ideology, known as 'Solidarism', which was adopted by Leon Bourgeois's Radical government of 1895. Here it was sustained by a network of radical freemasonary which targetted schoolteachers as the primary carriers for the movement and which it ultimately fed into the *Universités Populaires*, the specifically French mutation of extension.

In Britain, typically, the adult education movement did not become so overtly politicised until the Ruskin strike of 1909 which initiated the movement for Independent Working Class Education (although the formation of the WEA in 1903 may have derived some of its inspiration from the UP's example). Instead, although the movement aimed itself at the working man in fact it was women who were almost always in the majority in early extension classes. Women had indeed been the 'midwives' to the movement since James Stuart's opening talk to the Leeds Womens Educational League in the 1870s. So significant was the presence of women, especially young primary teachers, in extension classes that it may be possible to argue they actually *engendered* it.

Edward Carpenter, the socialist mystic and pioneer of homosexual rights, described the bulk of his pupils in his Leeds extension classes as of the "young Lady" class. He noted in his biography that:

> These were the main support of the movement, and they might be said to fall into three groups — namely, the best scholars from the girls schools, especially some of the best ones from the Friends schools; girls living at home and having nothing particular to do; and elder women in the same plight. these formed the great majority of the afternoon classes, and a considerable fraction of the evening classes; the remainder being elderly clerks and a few extra-intelligent young men, and a very small sprinkling of manual workers. (Carpenter, p81)

Despite the fact that he had written to Walt Whitman his belief that 'the women will save us' some years earlier, Carpenter was frustrated that his classes contained so few working men. He left off extension teaching ultimately to devote his time to lecturing within the Socialist movement itself in for example, Clarion Club meetings, the Socialist League and Independent Labour Party, where he felt he was more effective. However the seeds of an important strand of the adult educational movement were in many cases planted and nurtured by women earlier in the century. Carpenter's Leeds Friends, the Ford family, especially the mother and then the three daughters, Emily, Bessie and Isabella, had themselves initiated night classes for mill girls on welfare subjects, literacy and, of course, hygiene. Similar examples exist throughout British industrial areas and also in Europe, for example Alice Salomon in Germany and Emily Knappert in Holland. Indeed it could be argued that adult education and social work were in this context indistinguishable and were only separated by the professionalisation of these activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For Isabella Ford however, exceptionally, welfarism was not enough and, rejecting the Liberal politics of her family, she became a socialist and feminist pioneer. Like Carpenter her 'adult educational' work now became almost exclusively involved with the Labour movement, the women's movement and the peace movement. However the point to be made is that university extension may have been layered over an already existing practice of women's adult educational work which was perhaps as important as the workers' self-help groups which are already well-known. University extension may then have been a substantially feminised movement in which the radical but liberal impulses of the male university extension lecturers, if its not pushing the sexual metaphor too far, found an already fertile soil well-tended by women voluntary welfare workers. In this learning space social harmony through *welfare reform* may have become a broadly agreed concept.

If this was the Apollonian expression of university extension, then its Dionysian character was exemplified by those who, like Michael Sadler, the secretary of the Oxford Delegacy, believed in the modernising function of education. For Sadler, adult education was meant to inform a New Order of society. In this Sadler embraced a kind of Anglican 'ancient modernist' conception in which the newly enfranchised working class were to occupy a position within a hierarchically organised political and economic space under an aesthetic of nobility and craft dignity. However, lest it be confused with the cosy mediaeval retrospect favoured by the hegemonic class, Sadler believed in the urgent power of the New. For example, in 1913 in a talk about Ruskin to a meeting of Yorkshire WEA members, he interpellated the whole gathering as 'us moderns' and after celebrating the beauties of the machine age which included 'the gossamer beauty of scaffolding', 'the gaunt severity of Lancashire mill sheds' and 'the intense and silent power of dynamos and turbines'; he concluded, 'Where there is force there is beauty'. It was perhaps a rather dangerous fusion of his readings of Ruskin and Nietzsche. Although Sadler was speaking from the cutting edge of aesthetic modernism, since the occasion was close to Marinetti's Futurist exhibition in London, it bears a trace of the modernising cultural dynamic that underpinned much extension work. It also anticipated the radical rupturing of the fledgling WEA movement when the Yorkshire area, under George Thompson, (a truly organic intellectual of the class) tore itself from the North Western District and set itself up as an independent district the following year. John Dover Wilson, better know as a Shakespearian scholar, but then an HMI, called the new district 'the greatest instrument for the development of adult education that this country has yet seen'.

Thus while one stream of the adult educational movement was located in a tradition of welfarism another was involved in extending or modifying 'bourgeois' culture in revolutionary ways. This was not a populist move, in fact just the opposite, since it regarded high culture as the possession of an elite. But it was serving notice on the old elite that its time was up and that property ownership was no longer a sufficient qualification to belong. Instead it favoured something like a meritocracy where high culture could belong to anyone from any class who was prepared to make the necessary sacrifices. 'Let no Giotto remain among the sheepfolds' said Sadler.

With this kind of iconoclasm it was clear that the cultural dimension of adult education was not simply the tired purveyance of modest bourgeois values as it has sometimes been portrayed, but a sphere in which new kinds of life styles and widely divergent visions of society could be debated. Although much of this was radically progressive some could be sharply reactionary, in interesting ways, T.S.Eliot, for example, held Oxford University extension courses in French Literature in Ilkley in 1916 in which he first tried out his ideas on Romanticism and Classicism and outlined the new monarchism of the proto-fascist ideologist, Andre Maurras. Adult education classes could thus in certain circumstances be crucibles for shocking cultural experimentation as well. (Eliot, however, who felt that his Ilkley class gave him much more attention than he deserved, stopped teaching university extension a couple of years later and got a job in a bank).

It was in this ethos that one of Sadler's junior colleagues at Leeds University, Arthur Greenwood, wrote the pamphlet The Education of the Citizen. Greenwood, who was a Fabian freemason, gave tutorial classes in economics in the West Riding before World War One. He was one of the iconoclastic founders of the Yorkshire District and remained its chair for 40 years, much of the time when he was deputy leader of the Labour Party. During the First World War, as a civil servant in Lloyd George's wartime coalition, he served as secretary of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction. It was this commission that recommended state grant aiding to adult education and as the title of Greenwood's summary implies the point of adult education was 'lessons in citizenship'.

Greenwood published the pamphlet as an attempt to popularise the conclusions of the Adult Education Committee which had achieved the remarkable break-through of state grant in aid for adult education, for which he was chiefly responsible. He acknowledges that the twin motives for non-vocational adult education were the desire for fuller personal development and also social progress. But it was the social element he found most important: Indeed so far as the workers are concerned, it is, we think this social purpose which principally inspires the desire for education'. Workers, he believed, sought out education,

> to understand and help in the solution of the common problems of human society. In many cases therefore, their efforts to obtain education are specifically directed towards rendering themselves better fitted for the responsibilities of membership in political, social, and industrial organisations (Greenwood, p.13)

Thus by 1920, when the pamphlet was published, with the state aiding of adult education for social and political purposes, the movement had come of age. The key to the integration of the common people into the democratic mechanisms of the modernised state was 'citizenship', a concept which had had its contemporary gestation in the dimly lit but passionately heated rooms of the adult education movement.

This was undoubtedly a great achievement of the modernising movement. However, we now see of course just how partial and incomplete this notion was since women were incorporated only in an attenuated way, non-white groups did not share in Englishness and the despite radical reforms in housing, education and health, the welfare state was a poor substitute for a genuine commonwealth. In the face of the intense communal impoverishment and Postmodernist phantoms of the last decade or so it is now clear that adult education has to renew its original mission but this time has to negotiate an area beyond citizenship which rediscovers that initial radical impulse of individual 'spiritual' development and reasoned commonality that informed its modernising origins.

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EMPLOYERS AND THE CONTINUING EDUCATION OF EMPLOYEES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

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"... to produce a change in the culture of education and training in Britain it will be necessary to take a number of related initiatives. No single strategy will, of itself, transform the picture. However ... initiatives taken by individuals, industrial employers and government are already improving opportunities for adult learners at work."(1)

"The 'deep suspicion' ... characteristic of the relationship between industry and higher education a decade ago is no longer ... this is due to effective partnership meeting each members needs. Greater opportunity of consumer choice and a broader education sector, the opportunities provided by technology and the effects of international competition are all factors which have contributed to industry and education 'meeting a mutuality of needs'."(2)

THE cultural change considered in this paper centres on employers' attitudes and peformance in providing support for their employees' educational development. The preceding quotations offer a choice: that this cultural change is either incipient or well advanced. Taking the former view this paper is based on a distinction between company training and employee development programmes (EDPs). The distinction is valid in so far as company training is mostly work related and long established (at least in large businesses), while EDPs, expressly not related to employees' current work, are only just beginning to emerge in Britain – Ford's EDAP (Employee Development and Assistance Programme) being the most widely quoted.

This is not to argue that company training intentionally ignores employees' individual educational development: consider the tenets of human resource development (3) and continuing professional development. Nor is it argued that EDPs altruistically shun all thoughts of employees' job fitness. The point is rather that the present business culture largely accepts that companies should support training, while it is only tentatively assessing the benefits and propriety of supporting EDPs. The question posed is: are employers' attitudes broadening out from company training to support for, and even direct provision of, continuing education for their employees?

The answer presented here draws on information gained from two recent research and development projects, both funded by the Employment Department. One, at the Learning from Experience Trust, looked closely at Ford EDAP before examining three other large company EDPs – Lucas, Peugeot Talbot and Rover – so as to recommend how to 'seed' similar programmes in small-medium size enterprises. The other, at Warwick University's Continuing Education Department, examined *inter alia* the scope of employer support for employees studying on its part-time Honours degree – a modular 'pick and match' multi-subject degree rather than a closely work-related course. EDPs figured in the Warwick project through the coincidence that at least four of them are operative in companies, including Ford, in the Warwick part-time degree travel-to-study area.

The Trust's EDP study made it possible to identify the characteristics by which a 'successful EDP' might be recognised – and thereby distinguished from company training.(4) An EDP:

- is open to all permanent employees;
- offers an annual learning entitlement to all employees;
- offers study opportunities in out-of-work time in a wide variety of subjects and skills not necessarily related to an employee's current job;
- offers independent advice on suitable educational and training opportunities related to an employee's present abilities and future aspirations;
- supports personal development as a natural complement to business training requirements;
- ensures that employees study how and where it is most convenient for them;
- establishes partnerships with local colleges, schools and educational centres;
- creates the funds for the EDP either through management/union negotiations or through

direct company financing or through a charitable trust.

The essence of this list is that employees make their own non-job related choice of what, where and how to study in out-of- work hours (a choice aided if so wished through the provision of independent educational guidance), the study fees being met through an annual entitlement up to a prescribed maximum. Clearly EDPs offer a substantial benefit to employees. Were they to be widely implemented, they would represent a benefits increment comparable to the institution of paid holidays in the 1950s and company pension schemes in the 1980s. In fact they are still relatively rare, so the next step here briefly examines the provision and perceived benefits of the pioneering Ford EDAP.

EDAP, as created by Ford of Britain, was inspired by a similar but more restricted scheme instituted in the early '80s by Ford of America seeking to smoothe a way through massive redundancies. No doubt our own recession's twin imperatives of workforce 'downsizing' and 'upskilling' figured in management's thinking towards the British Ford EDAP; but there was also concern about moving towards a more highly educated workforce as a good in itself, not least perhaps in a hoped-for enhanced ability to comprehend more readily the changes needed for survival in a harshly competitive world industry. Equally EDAP's inception and development owes much to enthusiastic support by the trades unions, whether or not they were mostly anxious to ensure that management wasn't smuggling in a disguised form of company training at the employees' expense.

This creative tension between management and unions led to EDAP's true distinctiveness: a scheme jointly managed in each Ford plant by a committee equally representing management, unions and staff, allocating funds subscribed by all Ford employees through an agreed annual wage deduction (currently £50), and administered by experienced educationalists specially recruited as independent advisers. An independence underlined by their being formally appointed as staff of the Polytechnic of East London (a neighbour of Ford at Dagenham) and therefore not Ford employees at all.

A £50 a year contribution from each of Ford's near 40,000 staff constitutes an EDAP annual budget of two million pounds, sadly and substantially reduced in practice by Inland Revenue insistence that it is a taxable deduction. Nevertheless EDAP remains a financially sizeable force for doing continuing education good – in the form of a £200 annual educational entitlement available to each member of Ford's workforce. With a formula of £50-in and £200-on-offer-out, simple arithmetic suggests the annual fund will be exhausted after a quarter of the workforce has claimed a *full* entitlement. In the first year the take up was 12 percent, three years later it is getting near to 50 percent. Another instance of educational success built on financial anxiety.

While published information on EDPs is relatively sparse, reflecting their newness, Ford EDAP's inception and progress to date has been monitored by Ruskin College's Trades Union Research Unit (TURU).(5)(6) Suffice to note here that the study areas most in demand in descending order are; Health and Fitness, German, French, Driving Lessons, Golf Lessons, Bricklaying, Spanish, Computer Studies, Electronics and Car Maintenance. Provision at degree level is expanding, notably in Business Studies, and at some Ford plants Basic Education is offered.

Much group provision is made in-plant to facilitate attendance by shift workers. Tutors for these courses are generally contracted direct or through local education institutions, which are also used for some off-site group provision and for individual enrolments on their publicly available courses. Negotiations for group provision at local further and higher education institutions seem sometimes to have foundered over whether or not economic 'company training' rates should be charged.

The outcomes are positive, not only in enhanced educational and physical health and fitness, but also in improved working relationships stemming from the joint running of each plant's EDAP by management, unions and employees. And EDAP provides Ford with a further employment benefit for staff recruitment.

Other EDPs report high and growing take-up and similar benefits. Peugeot Talbot's ADP (Assisted Development Programme) is very similar to EDAP, especially in its close involvement of the trades unions. Rover's REAL (Rover Employees Assisted Learning) is more company-centred, with decision shaping routed through line managers and with little direct union participation.

Lucas Industries' CET (Continuing Education and Training) is very much employee-centred as befits a programme funded though a Lucas charitable trust which formally precludes any spending on company related training. However, these are all large employers. In Alan Tuckett's words:

> "Lucas and Ford demonstrate that large firms have begun to move quickly to recog-

> nise the importance of having a learning workforce in the changed circumstamces of the 1990s. A key test of how far such initiatives can be left to the market will be the speed at which comparable strategies are adopted in medium-sized and small firms."(3)

Then note that

> "Almost 97% of firms employ fewer than 20 people ... Small firms tend to do less training, particularly off-the-job training, than large firms."(4)

The Warwick project invited about sixty medium and large private and public sector employers (with a workforce locally of not less than 400) to sponsor employees to study for the part-time degree (day and/or evening attendance) offered at Honours level in Historical Studies or Literary and Cultural Studies or Social Studies, which can take six years or more to complete. It was quickly apparent that 'sponsorship' triggered alarming visions of open-ended, long-term financial commitments, difficult to accept at any time and scarcely on any company's agenda in recessionary times. Hence the invitations were modified to seek 'support' through a range of suggested help from written references, in-company publicity, time-off for study or reorganised working hours, to financial help with book purchases and part or full payment of fees.

The responses were mostly friendly and generally non- committal. Given that the approaches were addressed to company personnel or training departments, in the absence of any 'education' staff, it was not surprising that the part-time degree's subject areas were often regarded (not necessarily correctly) as non-work-related and therefore not training and therefore hardly financially supportable. A frequent corollary of this reasoning was that – if employee 'education' were to be supported – it would much more likely be aimed at basic education, where the need was more obvious, than higher education, which had more to do with an individual's personal aspirations. Nevertheless there was often an assurance that any employees enquiring about degree level study would at least be informed about the existence of Warwick's part-time provision. The local EDPs were an exception to this guarded response. EDP staff needed no persuasion to regard continuing education as a legitimate part of a company's concerns; it was after all the very thing they were engaged to cultivate.

Balancing, or even controverting, what might be perceived as this largely uncommitted employer attitude are the findings from a survey of Warwick part-time degree students. Responses from the 1991 entry cohort showed that among the 70 percent who were in paid employment (full or part-time) 70 percent had had or were continuing to receive some form of employer support, especially re-arranged working hours. This could suggest that continuing education providers might do better to cultivate employers essentially as information channels to their employees, who may then individually be more successful at negotiating their 'employer's support for their own study arrangements: rather than any direct approach by providing institutions for a generally available benefit.

The pragmatist in me subscribes to this individual approach. The idealist looks for the universal dissemination of EDPs, so that a mutually beneficial entitlement to continuing education (of the employees' own choice) is there as a matter of agreed and publicised company-wide right, rather than persuasive individual negotiation. Most Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) are busy setting up Education/Business Partnerships, but these are so far mostly focussed on secondary schooling. So while TECs (and Scottish LECs) might sometime in the future foster EDPs, the key to answering the immediate question of how to disseminate EDPs and work-based continuing education would seem to lie as much with post-school education as with employers.

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(1) Tuckett, A *Towards a Learning Workforce* National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Leicester 1991 p17.

(2) Quote from a reference in Skills and Enterprise Network *Update* Issue 2/92 Sheffield May 1992 to 'Industry and Education: Strengthening the Partnership' published by Institute of Manpower Studies Sussex University 1992.

(3) The following quotation however puts HRD more clearly at the training end of the education-training spectrum: "Successful HRD strategies are characterised by a

strong skill supply strategy linked to market positioning and development of the management team. Training and HRD strategies then follow naturally from the skill supply strategy ... (which) comprises sources of initial recruitment, training and development and policies for retraining, promoting and discarding people." from Skills and Enterprise Network 'Changing HRD Needs in Small-Medium Size Enterprises' *Skills and Enterprise Briefing* Issue 2/92 February 1992.

(4) Learning from Experience Trust (1992) leaflet on 'Employee Development Programmes for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises' obtainable free from the Trust at 6 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6JP.

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(6) More details on Ford EDAP are available from Sandra Southee, EDAP Office, Ford Motor Company, Body Plant, Dagenham RM9 6AS.

(7) Skills and Enterprise Network 'Changing HRD Needs in Small- Medium Size Enterprises' *Skills and Enterprise Briefing* Issue 2/92 February 1992.

NEW CULTURAL CONTEXTS FOR UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION: THE POTENTIAL OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-TRADITIONAL AGENCIES

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THE cutting edge of new development in British adult education has, historically, been wielded by innovative and responsive local organisations as much as by formal instititutions and statutory provision. Non-traditional agencies – community groups, voluntary associations or social movements – have throughout the century been a haven for adult learners who for whatever reason have been wary of the more traditional institutions. They have offered accessible venues and informal, non-threatening learning situations. Inspired by the particular needs of specific groups or localities, they have provided educational opportunities in novel or topical fields of study, often well before they are taken up by the mainstream. And when mainstream provision has become elitist or irrelevant, partnerships with other agencies have offered a new and more vital terrain of subjects, methods and students. In short, such non-traditional partnerships broaden the cultural context of university adut education, and can build bridges to subordinate cultural groups.

For example, the two decades around the turn of the last century were exhilarating years for British working class adult education. Education was a key tool in the struggle for social and industrial emancipation by the resurgent labour and socialist movement, which spawned an extraordinary array of classes and study groups. For university liberals, adult education was the way to extend higher education beyond the walls, and to ensure that the rising class, or at least its leaders, would be educated for citizenship. The Workers' Educational Association (W.E.A.), founded in 1903, drew university and working class adult educators together, and gave organisational coherence and strength to the ferment of workers' education. By the outbreak of war in 1914 it had attracted an astonishing number of affiliated voluntary organisations, including trade unions, Cooperative Committees, Working Men's Clubs and Study Circles. The workers' education movement pioneered a number of educational innovations. Joint university and W.E.A. committees provided appropriate tutors for the courses requested by affiliated associations and W.E.A. branches. The syllabus was negotiated between tutor and students, with an emphasis upon teaching which was relevant to the experiences and interests of participants. The three year Tutorial Class, which required regular essays from students, became a favoured, influential model for adult education.

This educational revival, which was largely the fruit of collaboration between universities and voluntary organisations, provided an inspiration for the 1919 Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction. The authors of the Report were concerned that voluntary effort should not be stifled by local or central government control. They proposed that county-based joint university and voluntary association committees should coordinate liberal adult education provision, and that public funding should go to any voluntary providers of quality adult education, regardless of political or religious affiliation. Yet economic cutbacks and the opposition of the Board of Education and the local education authorities nipped these proposals in the bud. Under regulations of 1924 only a limited number of 'Responsible Bodies' – including university extra-mural departments, the W.E.A., the Y.M.C.A. and the Educational Settlements Association – were funded by central government to provide 'non-vocational' liberal adult education.

In the inter-war years the university and W.E.A. partnership dominated adult education, though there were rumblings about a new traditionalism, and about the limits in form and subject of its offerings. The arch rival of the W.E.A. was the National Council of Labour Colleges, a movement for *independent* working class adult education which believed that public funding compromised working class independence, and which promoted an avowedly Marxist curriculum. At its peak in 1926 before the failure of the General Strike, the movement offered adult education classes to more than 30,000 students.

A rather different critique was offered by W.E. Williams in his 1934 publication, *The Auxiliaries* *of Adult Education*. Williams argued that the tutorial class movement was in decline because the adult students to whom it had offered an educational lifeline now had better access to schooling and higher education, and because its three year format and rigorous academic syllabus was too arduous for many potential adult learners. By contrast, the new 'auxiliaries' of adult education – voluntary associations such as the Women's Institute and Townswomen's Guild, the Councils of Social Service and Rural Community Councils, the Drama League and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England – often offered more accessible, flexible and appropriate educational opportunities. The unemployment crisis of the 1930s was, as in the 1980s, one especially important spur for new educational collaborations. The more innovative extra-mural departments and W.E.A. branches (as well as some local authorities) created educational partnerships with these new auxiliaries, and were revitalised by fresh subjects, methods and students for adult education. In my talk I will briefly discuss the innovative partnerships developed by the new Department of Adult Education in Nottingham during the interwar years.

Concern about the ossification of mainstream adult education intensified in the 1950s. The 1944 Education Act created the post-war structure for adult education and empowered local authorities to support voluntary association providers. But it did so in very unspecific terms, and it was some time before local education authorities became innovative in this area. The W.E.A. was entrenched within traditional institutional boundaries, and the extra-mural departments were hampered by traditions of academic respectability and elitism. Once again, radical adult educators looked to work with non-traditional, voluntary partners as a way of widening the bounds of adult education. In the late 1960s and early 1970s radical, community-based adult education took up the challenge. Pioneers like Tom Lovett in Liverpool argued that traditional adult education was off-putting for many working class people, and instead offered non-formal classes on subjects of direct relevance in accessible local venues. The new agenda included welfare rights groups, talks about parenting, community arts and pub discussions. Inter-agency collaboration – between local groups, education authorities and university adult educators – was vital.

Though such ventures were much criticised by traditionalists, in 1973 the Russell Report on adult education emphasised the value of 'outreach' and community initiatives, and proposed that they be incorporated into the structure of adult education. The timing of the Russell Report was unfortunate. The funding cuts and political reversals of the late 1970s and 1980s imposed terrible pressures upon both the mainstream of adult education and its voluntary fringe, and stifled innovation. Yet new opportunities and collaborations continued to emerge, often driven by and against political conservatism and its consequences. Two of the most exciting developments in the last decade have been Pioneer Work in Leeds and the Valleys Initiative for Adult Education in South Wales.

Mass unemployment was the spur for the 'Pioneer Work' of adult educators at Leeds University in the north of England. The Leeds Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies had a tradition of inter-agency collaboration in work with trade unionists and educationally disadvantaged adults. In 1982, at the height of a recession which was particularly severe in the north of the country, the Department initiated Pioneer Work as an educational programme for the unemployed. The programme was largely funded by specific grants, initially from the Department of Education and Science, and subsequently from other external sources including local authorities and the urban aid scheme of the European Social Fund. The unemployed target group was defined very broadly to include unemployed workers, working class women who were not registered as unemployed, men and women over the retirement age, and members of ethnic communities (strongly represented in the region).

In its first year Pioneer Work generated 112 free courses with 1361 students. The programme was dependent on extensive networking within local communities and with appropriate local organisations – including unemployed centres, community centres and tenants' associations – and courses were set up in collaboration with these groups and organisations. This local collaboration provided essential word of mouth publicity. It also helped to ensure that courses were appropriate in terms of subject matter (usually issues of direct relevance to the participants, such as welfare advice, health and well-being or local history) and teaching approach (group discussion more than tutor-centred teaching), and that they were were based in familiar local venues and run at suitable times. From the outset the Pioneer Work programme was monitored very closely; indeed this research component was one justification for university involvement in what some critics dismissed as 'basic education' unsuitable for academic involvement. On-going, participatory research enabled Pioneer Work to improve its programme, and to disseminate a model of good practice which has achieved a national and international reputation.

Pioneer Work has faced many issues. There have been subtle forms of resistance from within the university, and the insecurity bred by short term, external funding has caused staffing and planning difficulties. The particular nature of Pioneer Work has also generated specific staff development and support needs. Yet the continued success of the programme has proved that a latent desire for adult education can be met through collaboration with non-traditional partner groups. For participants that success has been registered in terms of progression to other educational opportunities, and in terms of increased confidence and awareness and a heightening of community activism. In recent years Pioneer Work courses have spawned voluntary networks which are shaping adult educational provision for their particular communities. They have also begun to encourage community education to develop into community enterprise and employment. Through local collaboration a university adult education programme has thus seeded a movement for individual and community development.

The coal mining communities in the valleys of South Wales are justly famous for a tradition of independent working class adult education. But adult education in the valleys has taken new forms now that the pits are closed and the communities of the valleys are creating a future without coal mining. For example, the DOVE Workshop (Dulais Opportunities for Voluntary Enterprise) in Banwen at the top of the Dulais Valley north east of Swansea, grew out of a miners' support group during the strike of 1984-85. The group was particularly concerned about the difficulties faced by local women who wanted to develop new skills and employment opportunities. Hoping to establish a machine knitting cooperative, they realised that they needed additional training. The nearest colleges at the bottom of the valleys were virtually inaccessible for women because of childcare commitments and inadequate public transport. So they decided to provide their own training within the community, backed up by a creche and, eventually, a minibus service.

The venture proved popular in Banwen and surrounding villages, and courses diversified to include word processing and information technology, photography and video production, poetry and women's health. The Women in Technology course (WIT) developed into a People in Technology (PIT) course enrolling men as well as women – including ex-miners and several couples – and reduced initial male hostility to the venture. Traditional adult education providers – including the Department of Adult Continuing Education at University College Swansea, the further education college in Neath and the W.E.A. – provided courses in partnership with the Workshop, including an outreach Access course which has had a huge local enrolment from adults with few formal educational qualifications who want a bridge into higher education. Since 1989 local authority and European urban aid funding has paid for workers to coordinate the expanding programme of courses, and to support community businesses which have developed in tandem with training.

The experiences and development of the DOVE Workshop are echoed in many of the other valleys of South Wales. The Valleys Initiative for Adult Education (VIAE), established in 1988, provides a network for more than eighty voluntary and statutory organisations concerned with the role of adult education in the survival and development of valleys' communities. VIAE's activities include advocacy and consultancy for adult education in the valleys, and advice and information dissemination for member groups. It also coordinates several single issue working groups which focus on issues including educational guidance, staff development and European Community initiatives.

The Department of Adult Continuing Education at University College Swansea plays an important supporting role in these initiatives. A philosophy of access and community participation – derived from and informed by the South Wales traditions of working class adult education – informs all aspects of the Department's work. European money helps to put that philosophy into practice, for example by funding an Adult Guidance Unit which provides information and advice for potential adult learners both in Swansea and in their own communities. The Department regards the outlying centres in the Valleys as essential for the achievement of both educational access and community development. As the director Hywel Francis claims: 'As is often the case the most innovative and exciting work takes place in the community, invariably through voluntary organisations. This should not be surprising as they have the greatest experience and have the most knowledge of the needs of individuals and communities'. The Department supports the centres through course provision (both liberal and vocational, though the distinction is not stressed), and by providing books in branches of the South Wales Miners' Library based at each centre. Proposals for part-time degree courses based at the centres suggest that the dream of a Community University of the Valleys is beginning to be achieved.

In my talk I will also describe my current research about non-traditional partnerships in Sussex. The New Opportunities Programme in the University of Sussex Centre for Continuing Education is developing collaborative work along the lines of the Leeds and South Wales experience. But we also have a prior tradition of partnerships with arts organisations, local and natural history groups, and local 'learned societies' which are not intended to combat educational disadvantage, but which do widen our student base and our educational provision. There is also a growing set of partnerships with other higher education institutions, and with further education institutes and Sixth Form Colleges. I will outline the origin and nature of those types of partnerships, and discuss the results of a recent questionnaire which was partly intended to guage their significance in other university adult education departments. I will also introduce some issues which arise from current research into the perspectives and motivations of Sussex's non-traditional partners.

I also intend to leave plenty of time for discussion of the issues which arise from this approach to adult education, and from historical and comparative research into non-traditional partnerships. What is the value and potential of such collaboration, in widening the subjects and methods of adult education, and making it more accessible to educationally disadvantaged adults? Should university adult education be involved in this work? What are the problems of short term funding, and how have new sources of money (for example from Europe) opened up new horizons? What are the tensions within collaboration? Has it been possible to develop partnerships with voluntary organisations in which power is equally shared, and which do not stifle voluntary initiative? What are the roles and values of networks of voluntary, statutory and university adult education providers?

Finally, how is current legislation going to alter the partnerships of university adult education? Collaboration between mainstream and non-traditional adult education providers, and the crucial role it has played throughout the century in making adult education more broad-based and accessible, is currently threatened by the government's attempts to 'rationalise' adult education. The Further and Higher Education Act will shift power and funding from local government education authorities to unelected Funding Councils, but will leave non-vocational 'leisure' or 'liberal' education with the less well funded local authorities. The local authorities may not have the money, and the Funding Councils may not have a commitment, to support adult education collaborations with voluntary, non-traditional providers. Not surprisingly, voluntary associations such as the Women's Institute were among the most vociferous opponents of government plans. History suggests that voluntary associations may well survive to remain a cutting edge of adult education, but that without their collaboration the new Funding Councils and revamped Further Education sector will be blunt instruments.

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NINE FACETS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR THE PROFESSIONS

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Introduction

ONE of the problems of continuing education for the professions (hereafter CEP) is the variety of types of learning situations which it encompasses. This often makes it difficult to make general statements. Therefore here a method of sorting out some of this variety is described, uses of this method are outlined and some effects of the changing culture are considered.

Firstly in any education there are the two main actors; the student and teacher. CEP differs insofar as the student's employer/agency also has an interest in the process. Also CEP students, being already trained professionals, are here called practitioners. Thus in CEP there are three main participants; practitioner, tutor and employer.

Secondly with regard to any specific CEP course we can ask general questions such as, who initiated it? who determined the curriculum? To each of these, the answer could be anyone of the three participants. Of course in some CEP courses an answer might involve two or more of the participants. However in some, one participant would have a prime role and this is the situation considered in this analysis.

This provides, as an initial differentiation, a 9-fold classification:

		Course	initiated by	
		Practitioner	Tutor	Employer
Curriculum	Practitioner	L	M	N
determined	Tutor	P	Q	R
by	Employer	X	Y	Z

Discussion

To bring this down to actual cases let us examine briefly examples of each of these.

Initially in the top row: i.e. courses where the curriculum is determined by the participants, consider them from left to right.

A very common illustration of the first situation is the, say, monthly meeting of a group of practitioners, who each take it in turn to introduce a topic for discussion etc. We ourselves also,at this conference, are an example of practitioners both setting up and directing a learning situation, and we must not forget the self-directed study we all undertake.

To illustrate the next situation: I periodically put on a course under the heading of "childhood problems". In the initial meeting we have a brainstorm session and put on the board as many childhood problems as we can think of. Then each member selects half a dozen and using these the group determines the content of the course.

The last situation can be illustrated by Baker days, if I may use an out-of-date term; i.e. the employer says, the workers shall have x days per year to update themselves, the choice of topics studied is up to the participants.

Next consider the central row where the curriculum is determined by the tutor, again from left to right.

The case of practitioners initiating a course of study where the curriculum is determined by the tutor can be illustrated by a group of radiographers who had taken time out of work to have children and feeling unsure about returning to work because of all the technological advances, asked for a refresher course to remedy this.

The central situation where the tutor initiates and designs the course is perhaps the most common, it includes a whole range of traditional inset-type courses and might be exemplified e.g. by a course of "law for teachers" or "management for ..."

The last situation is exemplified for instance by the employer deciding the workforce ought change or develop in a certain way, perhaps because of some government decision, and calling in a tutor or group of tutors to arrange it e.g. with a race awareness day .

The final row is probably the least common, i.e. where the employer determines what is studied, consider this from the left.

Firstly to cite one of our students as an example, the practitioner approaches the employer and asks for study-leave, to do a research degree, which is granted on condition that the research topic is "x", some need of the employer.

The next case is illustrated by considering the employer in what might be termed an educational cafeteria. For example, an educational institute offers a long menu of courses; the employer agrees a deal, we will send you x students a year on condition they do A,B and C and perhaps also J and K which are new courses the employer asks for.

The last case can be illustrated by a one-off course setup and arranged by the regional office of the RNIB local to where I work. They decided to set up a refresher course about adolescents for a range of their workers . So they called in a series of "specialists" to give talks on their own aspects of the topic: there was a youthworker, and me as a psychologist and I was asked to include discussion of youth unemployment, and an adolescence psychiatrist who was asked to include a consideration of drugs etc. .

Here so far, a first draft of an analysis of different types of CEP has been outlined.

What is the relative frequency of these different types in practice?

This is an empirical question which I have not examined systematically.

From a straw poll of students of a couple of courses, it seems most courses occur in the central column and row, i.e. ones initiated by educationalists or those having a curriculum determined by educationalists or both. This is of course what one would expect.

This is in addition to the self-directed study in the top left corner.

As noted earlier, what has been described here is a simple first level differentiation. Lots of CEP courses are instigated by 2 or more of the participant groups together. For example an Institution and Employer group might together arrange a course which involves taking on new staff which the Institute will not do unless the Employers guarantee a certain number of students a year.

Furthermore in addition to this 3x3 grid we can ask other questions e.g. Who teaches the course? In this case, remembering that the practitioner is a qualified professional, there are usually only two answers; the tutor or practitioner, therefore ultimately we can have a 3x3x2 grid.

However putting aside these more complex situations and for simplicity reconsidering cases where there is only one main initiator etc., as in the above 3x3 grid, we could look at the differences between these different types of CEP from a range of viewpoints: e.g. that of the tutor, that of the employer or that of the practitioner.

We could consider differences between rows or between columns.

For example what is the difference between courses in the different columns from the viewpoint of tutors?

Consider this from right to left.

The tutor in the right hand column to an extent has the role of a *hireling.*

The tutor in the left hand column has the role, if any, of a *facilitator.*

It is only in the central column that the tutor has the role of *traditional educator.*

Consider the difference, from the tutor's view, of the organisation of a course, the way it is vetted, the assessment in the course and the student's "payoff" in each of these columns.

On the right hand side contributions of tutors are often one-off events, the tutor prepares the talk for a certain occasion which is not repeated, the tutor has no role in the whole course outside his/her prescribed slot . The material is not checked by anybody else before presentation. Students in these courses are often not "assessed".

In the middle column material often has to have a set syllabus which is vetted perhaps by a committee and which when once established may be used for several courses. Students are sometimes assessed on these central courses, they may also therefore receive for example a certificate etc.

Consider the difference between the columns in terms of aims.

It will be recalled that the aims of education can range from that of personal development to that of the social aim of modifying a group of people. These columns illustrate this: the left hand column is primarily concerned with the personal development of the individual, while the right hand side is concerned with some institutional aim of changing the workforce in some direction.

We could go on discussing this comparison between the courses in different positions in the diagram for a long time, but I must limit myself to just asking a few questions to point the way.

Firstly, still considering the columns, what are the relative merits of each set of courses from the point of view of the tutors? or of the students? or of the employers?

What is the difference in motivation between students in the different columns?

Which would students see as most relevant to their day-to-day work?

What analogous differences are there between courses in different rows?

Some Effects of the Changing Context

With this analysis as starting point I want now to relate it to the theme of the conference.

What are the effects of changes in the background context and culture on this picture?

Many changes in society radically effect CEP, indeed they are often the cause or prompt of CEP. There is a long list of changes which could be discussed but here there is only opportunity to consider a few of the more salient groups of changes; I will consider some aspects of the changing cultures of practitioners and, more briefly, some of those of the educational institutions and the employers.

Firstly the public perception and status of a professional in our society is changing.

We all probably have the apocraphal idea of the lawyer, teacher or vicar, say earlier this century, who after training settled in e.g. a small county town and competently did exactly the same job, which did not change, year after year for decades, sometimes accountable in detail to nobody in particular and who had no need for CE.

This has now changed. There are several aspects of this change; I'll just comment on a couple: accountability and job-content.

We have now increasing public accountability, the possibility in some cases of litigation, and appraisal with increased consequential mandatory CE.

This is encroaching into most professions, even in the perhaps unlikely case of vicars. Firstly, how would you appraise a vicar?

One of the problems which crops up in this is the one which is as old as the church: do you appraise a priest by assessing his faith or his good works? Assuming that appraisal leads to CE, it is rather difficult to provide CE to improve faith but one can have CE to develop scope for good works.

However generally as part of the arrangements for appraisal schemes employers are often providing opportunity for CE which ideally ties up with the various aspects of appraisal.

Another significant aspect of the change in the concept of many particular professions is that due to the change in job-content. To illustrate this, one of our students did an analysis of the CE courses available to physiotherapists over the last two decades. Some of these CE courses continued with roughly the same degree of popularity. Some however increased in popularity, you can of course guess what these would be. She found an increase in courses related to demographic changes, e.g. more courses about elderly patients, in courses related to technological advances, e.g. electronic instrumentation, and more courses related to increased accountability, e.g. courses about legal responsibility.

Some CE is forced on a profession by changes in society, e.g. legislation about equal opportunities, similarly changes in the law about e.g. children, or offenders may mean whole groups of workers need updating, or there may be public disquiet leading to CE, e.g. riots led to Scarman and CE for the police, child abuse cases led to CE for social workers.

One of the consequences of a professional being in a changing world is the pressure to undertake CE which in some cases becomes mandatory.

This will increase activity in the right hand column. The employers will demand that workers undertake more CE. Indeed Baker days are mandatory CE for teachers.

A second major group of changes concerns the educationalists. Generally the society we live in is becoming more enterprise and market orientated and we are having to change accordingly. Some of us remember people who entered teaching to teach, now many teachers have to become market orientated sales people. In the past educationalists would devise a course, briefly advertise it and wait for the public to come. Nowadays educationalists need to get out and about and sell courses, and consequently be more prepared to modify and construct courses to the requirements and designs of employers and practitioners, this is not just with regard to content but also with regard to location and timing of courses etc. So one has an ongoing move out of the centre of the diagram to more employer and participant designed courses.

A third group of changes affect employers. They do not now just provide money for CE, they want more say in what is bought with it.

There has been a radical drop in students attending fulltime courses, they attend colleges part time or have inhouse courses.

Generally there is and will be more activity in the bottom row, as well as the right hand column.

CULTURES AND DOUBLE BEINGS: LINKING ADULT LEARNERS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

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Abstract

ADULT learners (and facilitators of adult learning) are confronted with alternative and competiting cultures and cultural traditions. The differences may be about beliefs, virtue, conceptions of selfhood, justice, metaphysical cosmologies, practical rationality, individual practices and institutional demands, and so on. The paper explores the need to reassert our "double being" – the duality of the human condition in any account of adult learning. It discusses some of the assumptions underpinning the learning of cultures, and the how culture links the learning of individuals and their different environments. It explores the assumption that adult learning is faciliated where the integrity and interrelatedness of the different concerns of the inner self and the outer life of individual learners is recognized.

The paper focuses on these dual aspects of individual learning. First, it explores the individual learner as an inner person and suggest how in cultural terms adult learning is primarily a problem (and product) of internalizing values and practices, and developing an independent moral conscience. Second, it examines the culture of practice and institutions and discusses their importance for the social person as an individual learner.

The paper suggests that the recognition of their double being may help individuals find a need for freedom to make choices about learning; viewed from another perspective, it is here that they may learn about the exercise of power.

Cultures and Double Beings: linking adult learners and their environments

MANY writers have taught us not to separate empirical study and critical evaluation of public life. Their belief is that it is possible to seek liberation from illusions and from mental pictures which, as Hanna Pitkin reminds us,

> [may] hold us captive... Self-knowledge, perspective on ourselves, acceptance of the truth of human limitations, is alienating, one might suggest, only so long as it is confined to the intellectual realm, is kept out of contact with – our real, inner selves and our real, outer lives.
> (quoted in Bernstein, 1976, 234).

Of course, the discovery of this our "double being" – our inner and outer selves – has long preoccupied thinkers. For example, the Greeks were aware of the subject-object dictonomy. Luther struggled with his (and other men's) two personalities: one for the individual, bound to no one but God, but also a wordly personality which bound the individual to other people. A secular version is found in Simmel's view of society where individuals stand inside and outside society at the same time. It means that a person has two points of gravity, within and outside himself or herself: individuals can be simultaneously unique autonomous people and players of generalized roles.

This duality of the human condition was rejected by Marx. Marx was critical of all subjectivism that confined authenticity to the inner world of experiences and emotions. He yearned for action without institutional constraints, freedom without alienation, praxis unrestricted by human structures. But neither Marx nor his followers have successfully removed the idea or the reality of social ambiguity. Rather they have helped highlight it and expose its contradictions.

If "we see ourselves as individual beings rooted in our body and soul, and social beings interwined with the intellectual and moral order of our networks, communities and workplace", the theory of *homo duplex*, i.e the person as a double being, explains and inspires action (Zijderveld, 1970). Each one of us is enhanced and burdened with the demands of our unique individuality and our own mode of existence, but also and at the same time with membership of divers groups and the demands of performing the roles that society has imposed on us. The recognition of our double being has important implications for adult learning. A challenge is to transcend the limitations of our dual being.

Any effective engagement in learning demands of the adult "getting together" his or her "inner" self and "outer" social being. These divisions are analytic (and there are many ways of defining them) but they also reflect everyday concerns and activities. For instance, if our inner self-confidence, self-respect, or our belief in God or humanity, is seriously damaged; if our ability to learn and work in a group is underdeveloped; if our knowledge of college or work place customs and proceedures is deficient, it is likely that our learning will also suffer. Each one of these aspect of our person has to be mobilized and used in activating learning. Culture is the medium which provides the important link between the individual, his or her learning, and the social environment. The individual learner has to modify and adjust his or her individual culture to accommodate the demands of culture(s) in changing, or in new environments. The extent to which this can be done depends on our understanding of the elements of our dual being and how they can be mobilized to help individuals learn.

Culture can be understood as a set of solutions which a group of people develop to meet specific problems posed by the situation in which they find themselves. But in our societies there are multiple cultures. A fundamental challenge is, therefore, to learn to function within very different cultures; be it in family, friendship and neighbourhood networks, work places, clubs, shopping centres, evening classes, and so on. In each of these situations, individuals (and groups) are concerned (although not always consciously) with the cultures – the values and the meanings, the ideas and the practices that govern our relationships and activities in these divers milieux.

The assumption is that learning is best pursued with the cultural grain [1]. For example, the Vygotskian approach suggests that there is an alternative theoretical view of learning that appears to accept cultural differences. Vygotsky believed that the only "good learning" is that which is in advance of development. He proposed the idea of a zone of proximal development (ZPD), which he defined as

> the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under the guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.
> (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86)

The view taken is that people discover, create and use culture. They create their own meanings but they also do so with others. Social change or innovation becomes not merely a matter of individual performance and accomplishment, but a question of working together and changing group (or societal) values, meanings, and practices. Thus learning becomes a social transaction and not only a solo performance in a subjectivist world. The transactional nature of learning means that (in many fields) the novice and the aspirant is inducted into a culture by more skilled members. The unskilled or the uninitiated can do better if prompted and "scaffolded" by an expert than on their own. Individuals have not only "to learn" how to learn, but how "to learn" with others.

Any account of adult learning is therefore about people doing things, creating meanings, knowing, and helping each other. This active and engaged notion of learning emphasises the living and historical products of problem solving, and highlights the cultural context of individual (and group) learning. Any contemporary theory, model, or account of learning, or learning strategy, has to incorporate the existence of different cultural groups and cultural differences, if these social constructs are to reflect contemporary changes. Moreover, any comprehensive account must also incorporate a concern for our inner selves as well as our outer lives, if our human condition is to be reflected in educational practice.

The Inner person

The inner person may be seen as having two tasks. First, learning to internalize values and practices of the surrounding cultures. Here a psychological distinction is assumed between the "I" and the "me" in self. The "me" is seen as the organized attitudes of others that one has assumed oneself. The "I" is the response of the individual to the attititudes of the others: one reacts to the others as an "I" (Mead, 1934).

The second task, as Buber has reminded us, is learning that men or women can judge themselves. People, unlike all living beings known to us, are able to set at a distance not only their environment, but also themselves. "As a result, [man] becomes for himself a detached object about which he can not only reflect, but which he can, from time to time, confirm as well as condemn" (quoted in Ledermann, 1984, p. 5) The social environment does influence and help form a person's conscience. But Ledermann argues (as does Buber) that

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[1] Too often, Behaviourists and Piagetian theorists have depicted human learning as "pitted against nature": the Behaviourist's model shaping up responces to fit the world of stimuli; the Piagetian model depicting a lone child struggling single-handed to strike some equilibrium between himself or the world. (Bruner, 1985, p. 90).

> conscience must not be understood in terms of the imprint that social surroundings make upon the individual person. Conscience is not the acceptance of an outside authority. Conscience is personal... One cannot, of course, deny that people are subjected to pressures... that certain codes of conduct are expected of them... It is also true that people are too frightened to resist such influence. But conscience is not genuine if it has been imposed, and a mature person resists such imposition. He has the strength to decide what is right and wrong. Conscience is the inner force which carries personal conviction and which governs life. (Ledermann, 1985, p.5)

Critique and action depend on the power of individuals and groups to seek detached views of their culture. The important point, as MacIntyre explains, is that

> Anyone and everyone can thus be a moral agent, since it is the self and not in social roles or practices that moral agency has to be located. The contrast between this democratization of moral agency and the elitist monopolies of managerial and therapeutic expertise could not be sharper. (MacIntyre, 1985, 32)

The outer social person

Individual adults working and learning in a variety of settings have to put their new learning into the context of their living experience; be it, in the classroom, in the work place, in family and community situations, in leisure centres, or on the sports fields.

But it is helpful not to confuse what goes on in an institution (here defined as a place and its social organization) with practice (an organized and disciplined activity) (MacIntyre, 1985). For example, chess, music, physics, parenting, law, teaching and medicine are practices; chess clubs, concert centres, physics laboratories, families, courts of law, colleges and hospitals are institutions. We may know (or we can learn) a great deal about the culture of different activities, be it sailing, engineering, parenting, medicine, accountancy, dentistry, cricket, carpentry, tennis, or whatever. We may also know (or we can learn) about the total culture of the places where learning may be going on, in schools, colleges, leisure centres, factories, hospitals, building sites, families, street corners, supermarkets, or wherever. But knowing about an activity is radically different from a capacity to engage or practice the same activity.

The distinction between institution (or place) and practice (or activity) is, therefore, not only academic. In everyday living, we may be also aware of our own and other people's capacities and learning. Frequently (and regretably) there is no love lost between whose who see themselves as "the initiated" ("insiders") and those they (the insiders) regard as "the uninformed" ("outsiders"), or worse. Here an important question is whether the quality of an artefact or a practice can (or should) only be recognised by people who have also participated in the experience; and whether those who lack experience are competent to pass judgment. Some people argue, however, that anyone is free to judge excellence in performance, construction, painting or building. But there are also craftmen and craftwomen, and trained professionals, who think that external criteria introduced by managers or market forces do not necessarily relate to the nature of their craft or their practice. Thus, individual learners may also need to know how to make most of their institutional setting. How to maximize his or her learning? How to help create the conditions which will enhance his or her learning? Here it is, of course, important to distinguish between the values and goals of individuals, and the purposes of an institution. We can ask an individual about his values or goals, but it is more difficult to approach an organization in the same way. But an increasing number of organizations do produce "mission" statements.

Of course, institutions are not neutral. Institutions can be not only constraining and alienating but also liberating and enhancing. Institutions govern cognitive processes and regulate interaction between individuals and groups. They shape behaviour and habits of thought. They influence learning and the ways individuals think and act (Douglas, 1987).

It is too easy to underestimate the power of institutions to help generate new knowledge and skills, and to put out old knowledge and skills into new heads and hands. There is also inadequate recognition that economic change may depend on institutional learning and social innovation. Thus, the degree of flexibilty and ability of institutions to learn is critical for the dissemination of innovation in the economy.

There is a powerful argument that an expanding economy requires individual freedom and flexible innovative institutions. The freedom to think, explore, and innovate may be at least as important as the freedom to sell, and learning to sell to the highest bidder. Certainly in restricting the opportunities of individuals to learn, and institutions to examine themselves critically we may end up with nothing that will sell (See Jessop *et al.*, 1991).

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CULTURAL CONFLICTS: ADULT AND FURTHER EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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THE world of adult education has been shattered by recent changes in government policy. Each member of the triumvirate of adult education providers (the Local Education Authorities (LEAs), the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and the university extramural departments) has undergone so many changes that the existence of adult education as an activity separate from further and higher education seems unlikely to continue for much longer. In this paper, I discuss the consequences of this for the training of adult educators, particularly in relation to the Certificate in Education (Further Education).

The Cert Ed has been the only teacher training route available to people working in FE. It had been provided only by the polytechnics who were ex-colleges of education (Bolton, Huddersfield, Thames and Wolverhampton), but has more recently been offered by other polytechnics and universities in conjunction with FE colleges. The courses in polytechnics are validated by CNAA, although those associated with universities (eg Exeter, Manchester, Warwick) are validated by the university itself. With the demise of CNAA from September this year, the new universities will also be able to validate the Cert Ed.

The in-service version of the Cert Ed (FE) normally lasts two years, with the first year sometimes franchised out to participating colleges (eg the schemes offered by Lancashire and Sheffield Polytechnics). Other institutions have taught the whole course themselves (eg Huddersfield Polytechnic). However, the course now appeals to a much wider audience than its original target group of teachers in FE. This is reflected in the change in nomenclature from Cert Ed (FE) to Cert Ed (Post-compulsory), reflecting the progressive overlap between AE, FE and HE. Many students take the City and Guilds FE and AE Teachers' Certificate 7307 (now 7305) in an FE college before doing the Cert Ed; sometimes they are then accredited for part of the Cert Ed (up to the equivalent of the first year, depending on the institution and the course).

Universities have usually been involved with the training of adult educators through their diploma and masters provision, as reflected in SCUTREA membership. Lately, there have been many comments about the increasingly diverse backgrounds of students on such courses and the gradual overlap of AE and FE teacher training. Many have also commented on the need to think about AE in a much broader framework than has happened in the past. As the technologies of education and training become more and more complex and the language of competence, accreditation, delivery and evaluation resounds in the AE classroom, adult educators struggle to keep up to date through training. Because the usual provision is through diplomas and masters, the demand for more professional training has been noted on these courses.[1]

At least two university adult education departments have been involved with the validation of a Cert Ed although they continue also to provide masters degrees. The departments may not teach on the Cert Ed but they receive a proportion of the mandatory fee for validating the course.

My recent experience of setting up a Cert Ed has raised many questions for me about the clash of cultures and cultural practices that I believe is about to sound in the training of adult educators. I expect the world of professional training for adult educators in universities to change dramatically for two reasons. First of all, because of the disappearance of LEA involvement in AE and FE as a result of the F and HE Act and the likely disappearance of already scarce discretionary awards which supported masters and diploma students, the existing problems of recruitment to postgraduate courses will be exacerbated unless some other way of funding professional courses is found. One possibility is to develop Cert Eds which attract mandatory awards. This means that students do not have to pay fees for the course. If they are in full-time employment, their employers have to make some contribution towards the course through day-release schemes and mentor systems, but students do not have to find the fees themselves, unlike many current postgraduate students.

The second reason is the existence of a Provisional Task Group (PTG) which is considering a lead body in education to look at the training of lecturers in further and higher education in England. The PTG has also been asked by the DES to consider the training of professional staff in adult education centres and the youth service.

When (and not if) such a body reports, it is bound to provide a competence-based framework for the training of FE and AE staff in line with other lead bodies. People training adult educators will be confronted with the "quiet revolution"[2] of competence-based learning that Paul Armstrong writes about in this volume, and they will not necessarily be equipped professionally or academically to deal with the onslaught of records of assessment, portfolios of professional achievement, accreditation of prior learning and so on. Nor will the ideological framework of competence based education and training sit comfortably with adult education ideologies or postgraduate curricula.

In October, 1991, my department was approached by a local consortium of FE teacher trainers, LEA advisers and representatives from LEA AE (in Leeds now called FE (Community)). The consortium wanted to set up a Cert Ed which would be validated by the University and would allow their staff to teach alongside University staff on an in-service training course for teachers in FE and AE. The members also believed that other people teaching adults such as private trainers and nurse educators would be interested in taking the course. They particularly wanted to develop this joint venture because they were dissatisfied with current teacher training provision in the area (Leeds had had no local provision) and because they wanted to enable students taking their competence-based C and G (7305) courses to be accredited for this work if they took the Certificate.

The Department was keen to become involved in the scheme because it wanted to develop its profile of professional training and because it had been asked by the University to develop strong links with FE colleges in the city. The Department was also eager to work with SCEU[3] in the School of Education which houses most of the AE masters courses. Over the past six months, an expanded consortium (the original members plus representatives from the School of Education and the Department) has had the course validated by the University and plans to start teaching in September.

In Leeds, this approach will make even more sense when the LEA hands over responsibility for tium of FE colleges. Despite very different ideologies and teaching practices, AE and FE is bound to be more and more integrated. Furthermore, with universities looking to FE colleges to teach franchised first year courses, it seems likely that HE teacher training will also be integrated into a post-compulsory teacher training system, even if it is not the current certificate.

In our surge of enthusiasm for the scheme, we have faced many conflicts in its development. The chief problem lies in the notion of a competence-based scheme and the resulting catalogue of accreditation and assessment procedures. The pressures for CBET come from three sources: current changes in vocational and nonvocational education (and the necessity to apply these techniques to teacher training), the consortium itself and HMI. We have not resolved the issue except through some sort of compromise - the first year of the scheme (taught mainly by FE and AE staff) is based on C and G competences, while the second is much more traditional in its approach and curriculum.

In some ways, the focus on competence might be seen to be advantageous to professional courses. The instrumental curriculum that arises out of a competence-led approach is very similar to the modules that are thought by postgraduate students to be essential[4]: teaching methodology, research methods, evaluation and curriculum planning and implementation.

Certainly, current certificates seem to offer a non-critical acceptance of competence-based education. This can be seen, for example, in David Minton's recent textbook for C and G 7305[5] which builds on the framework of performance criteria to allow students to assess themselves.

There are a few dissenting voices but, rather like discussions about quality[6], these are infrequent and theoretically undeveloped. One voice in the dark is Paul Armstrong who offers a critique of competence-based approaches to education and training in the light of national standards that have been set for training at this conference. Ashworth and Saxton[7] have also offered a comprehensive critique of the notion of competence on sandwich courses and I will now develop this to apply to the training of AE and FE teachers.

Their critique is two-pronged: firstly, they question whether it is possible to specify competence as an aspect of the description of human activity and secondly, they discuss the implications for education and training of competence models. Many of their criticisms translate very well to demonstrate how CBET conflicts directly with principles of AE.

For example, they argue that competences are excessively individualistic, whereas "the upshot of human activity is very typically not the result of the behaviour of any one individual, or even of a team whose separate contributions are identifiable, but of a group *as such* (their italics)"[8]. The group's importance has been stressed repeatedly in AE literature, but we are faced with a method of teaching that diminishes its role.

In AE, much play has been made of the importance of the development of critical thinkers[9] and this has become one of the essential features of AE practice. But how could we measure this in our own students through competence statements? What would the competence statement be?

Furthermore, what about the links between theory and practice in AE teaching? Robin Usher and Ian Bryant[10] argue that we should be trying to develop a curriculum that improves practice through a process of critical reflection. How could we measure this through competence statements? What performance criteria would students need to achieve in order to demonstrate that they were using theory as an interpretative resource?

A final demonstration of the conflict between competence models and AE lies in the atomistic nature of the elements of competence. Thus, a student might not be able to use an overhead projector effectively and plan a class well and ask students open-ended questions, but the student might still be an effective and engaging teacher because she or he had some intangible quality of charisma or enthusiasm. The additive model of competence could not apply in this case.

Even if these fundamental problems did not exist, there are many resulting difficulties of CBET. For example, while it makes sense to accredit people for modules they have already done on a course (for example if they have taken Stage I or II of the adult education teacher training scheme), how does one begin to use the group as the vehicle of support and change, if individuals are not part of it? [11]

What about the question of level? While many people may have degree-level qualifications in the subject they teach, the course is treated by CNAA as Level I of a degree programme. But are the students working at Level I and if so, what does this imply about the quality of work expected of students? What are the implications for current postgraduate schemes? Could students count the Cert Ed towards a postgraduate qualification or would they have to repeat all the work they had done? Furthermore, can there be Level I courses which don't lead to Level II and III?

How do university adult educators begin to tackle assessment-led professional qualifications, when their concerns have traditionally been essays and long studies? Are our standards translatable into competence statements and performance criteria?

Perhaps my view of the future of AE professional training is unnecessarily gloomy and critical. However, I believe we are not alone in this as HE faces one of its biggest challenges with the introduction of NVQs and GNVQs and increased demands for it to meet the needs of the labour market. Can we develop a comprehensive programme of training that is not instrumental and that challenges the current trends of CBET?

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(11) Sylvia Harrop and Geoff Woodcock also comment on the fragmentation of modular schemes in their paper cited above.